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THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

VOL. II

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THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

AND THE WORSHIP OF THE DEAD

BY

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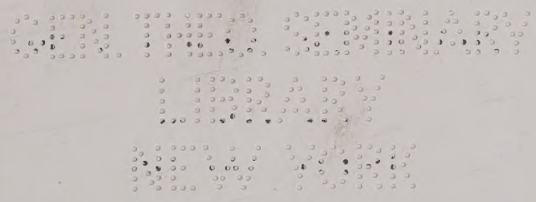
VOL. II

THE BELIEF AMONG THE POLYNESIANS



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PREFACE

THE first volume of this work, which comprised the Gifford Lectures given by me at St. Andrews in the years 1911 and 1912, dealt with the belief in immortality and the worship of the dead, as these are found among the aborigines of Australia, the Torres Straits Islands, New Guinea, and Melanesia. In the present volume I take up the subject at the point at which I broke off, and describe the corresponding belief and worship among the Polynesians, a people related to their neighbours the Melanesians by language, if not by blood. The first chapter formed the theme of two lectures delivered at the Royal Institution in 1916; the other chapters have been written for lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1921 and 1922. But in the book the lecture form has been discarded, and the treatment of the subject is somewhat fuller than comports with the limits imposed by oral delivery.

Should circumstances allow me to continue the work, I propose in the next volume to treat of the belief in immortality and the worship of the dead among the Micronesians and Indonesians.

J. G. FRAZER.

No. 1 Brick Court, Temple,
London, 19*th July* 1922.

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CHAPTER I

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE MAORIS

§ 1. *The Polynesians*

THE Polynesians are the tall brown race of men who inhabit the widely scattered islands of the Pacific, from Hawaii on the north to New Zealand on the south, and from Tonga on the west to Easter Island on the east.[1] Down to the eighteenth century they remained practically unknown to Europe; the first navigator to bring back comparatively full and accurate information concerning them was our great English explorer, Captain James Cook. Thus at the date of their discovery the natives were quite unaffected by European influence: of our civilisation they knew nothing: of Christianity, though it had existed in the world for nearly eighteen hundred years, they had never heard: they were totally ignorant of the metals, and had made so little progress in the arts of life that in most of the islands pottery was unknown,[2] and even so simple an invention as that of bows and arrows for use in war had not been thought of.[3] Hence their condition was of great interest to

[1] Horatio Hale, *The United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology* (Philadelphia, 1846), pp. 4 *sqq.*, 9 *sqq.*; J. Deniker, *The Races of Man* (London, 1900), pp. 500 *sqq.*

[2] J. Deniker, *The Races of Man* (London, 1900), pp. 154, 501; *British Museum, Handbook to the Ethnographical Collections* (1910), p. 147.

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), v. 416; W. Mariner, *Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, Second Edition (London, 1818), i. 67; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, Second Edition (London, 1832–1836), i. 220; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, Second Edition (London, 1856), p. 212; J. Deniker, *The Races of Man*, p. 501. In Polynesia "the bow was not a serious weapon; it was found in some islands, *e.g.* in Tahiti and Tonga, but was principally

students of the early history of man, since it presented to their observation the spectacle of a barbaric culture evolved from an immemorial past in complete independence of those material, intellectual, and moral forces which have moulded the character of modern European nations. The lateness of their discovery may also be reckoned a fortunate circumstance for us as well as for them, since it fell at a time when scientific curiosity was fully awakened among us, and when scientific methods were sufficiently understood to allow us to study with profit a state of society which differed so widely from our own, and which in an earlier and less enlightened age might have been contemplated only with aversion and disgust.

The question of the origin of the Polynesian race is still unsettled, but the balance both of evidence and of probability seems to incline in favour of the view that the people are descended from one of the yellow Mongoloid races of South-Eastern Asia, who gradually spread eastward over the Indian Archipelago and intermingling to some extent with the black aboriginal inhabitants of the islands formed the lighter-tinted brown race which we call the Polynesian.[1] A strong argument in favour of this theory is drawn from the Polynesian language, which belongs essentially to the same family of speech as the Melanesian and Malay languages spoken by the peoples who occupy the islands that intervene between Polynesia and the south-eastern extremity of the Asiatic continent.[2] The black Melanesian race occupies the south-eastern portion of New Guinea and the chain of islands which

used for killing rats or in shooting matches" (*British Museum, Handbook to the Ethnographical Collections*, p. 153). As to the limited use of bows and arrows in Polynesia, see further E. Tregear, "The Polynesian Bow," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. i. no. 1 (April 1892), pp. 56-59; W. H. R. Rivers, *The History of Melanesian Society* (Cambridge, 1914), ii. 446 *sqq.*

[1] Compare (Sir) E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology* (London, 1881), p. 102; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesian Languages* (Oxford, 1885), pp. 33 *sqq.*; S. Percy Smith, *Hawaiki, the Original Home of the Maori* (Christchurch, etc., New Zealand, 1910), pp. 85 *sqq.*; A. C. Haddon, *The Wanderings of Peoples* (Cambridge, 1919), pp. 34 *sqq.*; A. H. Keane, *Man Past and Present*, revised by A. Hingston-Quiggin and A. C. Haddon (Cambridge, 1920), p. 552.

[2] On the affinity of the Polynesian, Melanesian, and Malay languages, see R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesian Languages* (Oxford, 1885), pp. 10 *sqq.*; S. H. Ray, "The Polynesian Language in Melanesia," *Anthropos*, xiv.-xv. (1919–1920), pp. 46 *sqq.*

stretches in a great curve round the north-eastern coasts of New Guinea and Australia. The brown Malays, with the kindred Indonesians and a small admixture of negritoes, inhabit the islands westward from New Guinea to the Malay Peninsula.[1] Of the two kindred languages, the Polynesian and the Melanesian, the older in point of structure appears unquestionably to be the Melanesian; for it is richer both in sounds and in grammatical forms than the Polynesian, which may accordingly be regarded as its later and simplified descendant.[2]

But whereas the three peoples, the Polynesians, the Melanesians, and the Malays speak languages belonging to the same family, their physical types are so different that it seems impossible to look on the brown straight-haired Polynesians and Malays as pure descendants of the swarthy frizzly-haired Melanesians. Accordingly in the present state of our knowledge, or rather ignorance, the most reasonable hypothesis would appear to be that the Melanesians, who occupy a central position in the great ocean, between the Polynesians on the east and the Malays on the west, represent the original inhabitants of the islands, while the Polynesians and Malays represent successive swarms of emigrants, who hived off from the Asiatic continent, and making their way eastward over the islands partially displaced and partially blent with the aborigines, modifying their own physical type in the process and exchanging their original language for that of the islanders, which, through their inability to assimilate it, they acquired only in corrupt or degenerate forms.[3] Yet a serious difficulty meets us on

[1] J. Deniker, *The Races of Man*, pp. 482 *sqq*.

[2] *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, vol. iii. *Linguistics*, by Sydney H. Ray (Cambridge, 1907), p. 528 (as to the relation of the Polynesian to the Melanesian language). As to the poverty of the Polynesian language in sounds and grammatical forms by comparison with the Melanesian, see R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesian Languages*, p. 11.

[3] This seems to be the hypothesis favoured by Dr. R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesian Languages*, pp. 33 *sqq*. Compare J. Deniker, *The Races of Man*, p. 505. On the other hand Sir E. B. Tylor says (*Anthropology*, pp. 163 *sq*.), "The parent language of this family may have belonged to Asia, for in the Malay region the grammar is more complex, and words are found like *tasik* = sea and *langit* = sky, while in the distant islands of New Zealand and Hawaii these have come down to *tai* and *lai*, as though the language became shrunk and formless as the race migrated further from home, and sank into the barbaric life

this hypothesis. For both the Polynesians and the Malays, as we know them, stand at a decidedly higher level of culture, socially and intellectually, than the Melanesians, and it is hard to understand why with this advantage they should have fallen into a position of linguistic subordination to them, for as a rule it is the higher race which imposes its language on its inferiors, not the lower race which succeeds in foisting its speech on its superiors.

But these are intricate questions which await future investigation. I cannot enter into them now, but must confine myself to my immediate subject, the beliefs of the Polynesians concerning the human soul and the life after death.

In spite of their diffusion over a multitude of islands separated from each other by hundreds and even thousands of miles of ocean, the Polynesians are on the whole a remarkably homogeneous race in physical type, language, and forms of society and religion. The differences of language between them are inconsiderable, amounting to little more than some well-marked dialectical variations: all dwell in settled homes and subsist partly by fishing partly by the fruits of the earth, tilling the soil and gathering cocoanuts and bread-fruit from the trees:[1] all are bold and expert mariners, making long voyages in large well-built canoes: all possess a copious and comparatively well developed mythology; and all at the time of their discovery enjoyed, or perhaps we should rather say suffered from, a singular institution, half social, half religious, which may be summed up in the single Polynesian word taboo. Hence it would no doubt be possible to give a general account of the belief in human immortality which would hold good in outline for all the different branches of the Polynesian race; but such an account would necessarily be somewhat meagre, inexact in detail, and liable to many

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of ocean islanders." Dr. W. H. R. Rivers suggests that the Polynesian language "arose out of a pidgin Indonesian" (*The History of Melanesian Society*, ii. 584).

[1] J. Deniker, *The Races of Man*, p. 501. On the apparent homogeneity of the Polynesian race see W. H. R. Rivers, *The History of Melanesian Society* (Cambridge, 1914), ii. 280, who, however, argues (ii. 280 *sqq.*) that the race has been formed by the fusion of two distinct peoples.

exceptions. Accordingly I shall not attempt it, but shall describe the creed of each group of islanders separately. As the beliefs of the various islanders on this momentous topic are characterised by a general similarity, the method I have adopted will no doubt involve a certain sameness and repetition, but for the serious student of comparative religion I hope that these disadvantages may be more than outweighed by the greater accuracy and fulness of detail which this mode of treating the subject renders possible.

The principal groups of islands included in Polynesia are New Zealand, the Friendly or Tonga Islands, the Samoan or Navigators Islands, the Hervey or Cook Islands, the Society Islands, including Tahiti, the Marquesas Islands, and Hawaii or the Sandwich Islands.[1] All of them, except New Zealand, are within the tropics; and all of them, except Hawaii, lie to the south of the equator. I shall deal with them in the order I have mentioned, beginning with New Zealand.

§ 2. *The Maoris of New Zealand*

The Maoris of New Zealand are not aborigines of the islands which they inhabit: they possess long and apparently in the main trustworthy traditions of their migration to New Zealand many generations ago. The circumstances which led to the migration, the names of the canoes in which it was accomplished, the names and genealogies of the chiefs who conducted it, are all recorded, having been handed on by word of mouth from generation to generation, till they were finally written down from the lips of the natives by English enquirers.[2] The place from which the Maoris came is unanimously designated as Hawaiki, an

[1] Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology* (Philadelphia, 1846), pp. 4 *sqq.*

[2] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand* (London, 1843), ii. 85 *sqq.*; Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology* (Philadelphia, 1846), pp. 146 *sqq.*; Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology* (London, 1855), pp. 123 *sqq.*, 136 *sqq.*, 162 *sqq.*, 202 *sqq.*; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, Second Edition (London, 1856), pp. 1 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, Second Edition (London, 1870), pp. 26, 27, 289 *sqq.*; John White, *The Ancient History of the Maori, his Mythology and Traditions* (London, 1887–1889), ii. 176 *sqq.*; Elsdon Best, "The Peopling of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) pp. 73-76. The number of generations

island or group of islands lying far to the north or north-east of New Zealand. Among English scholars there is some difference of opinion whether Hawaiki is to be identified with Hawaii, that is, the Sandwich Islands, or with Savaii, one of the Samoan or Navigators Islands, since Hawaii and Savaii are both dialectical variations of the New Zealander's pronunciation of Hawaiki.[1] Though Hawaii is more than twice as far as Savaii from New Zealand, being separated from it by almost the whole breadth of the tropics and a great stretch of ocean besides, some good authorities have inclined to regard it as the original home of the Maoris, but the balance of opinion appears now to preponderate in favour of the view that Savaii was the centre from which the Polynesians dispersed all over the Pacific.[2] However, the question is one that hardly admits of a positive answer.

The Maoris are not a pure-blooded Polynesian race. Among them even at the present day two distinct racial types may be distinguished, one of them the comparatively fair Polynesian type with straight nose and good features, the other the swarthy, thick-lipped, flat-nosed, frizzly-haired Melanesian type. They have a tradition that on their arrival in New Zealand they found the country in the possession of a dark-skinned folk of repulsive appearance, tall, spare, and spindle-shanked, with flat faces, overhanging brows, and noses of which little but the upturned nostrils could in some cases be discerned. These savages wore

which have elapsed since the migration to New Zealand is variously estimated. Writing about the middle of the nineteenth century Shortland reckoned the number at about eighteen; Mr. Elsdon Best, writing in 1914, variously calculated it at about twenty-eight or twenty-nine (on p. 73) and from eighteen to twenty-eight (on p. 74).

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 33.

[2] H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, pp. 119 *sq.*; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand* (London, 1843), ii. 85 *sqq.*; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 33 *sqq.*; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand* (London, 1859), i. 57 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 26; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z., 1891), pp. 56 *sqq.*, *s.v.* "Hawaiki"; A. C. Haddon, *The Wanderings of Peoples* (Cambridge, 1919), p. 36. Of these writers, Dieffenbach, Shortland, and Taylor decide in favour of Hawaii; Thomson, Hale, and Haddon prefer Savaii; Tregear seems to leave the question open, pointing out that "the inhabitants of those islands themselves believe in another Hawaiki, neither in Samoa nor Hawaii."

little clothing and built no good houses, nothing but rude shelters against the inclemency of the weather. They were ignorant and treacherous, and the Maoris regarded them with dislike and contempt; but their women looked with favour on the handsome Maori men, and a mixture of the two races was the result. This tradition both explains and is confirmed by the two different racial types which still exist side by side or blent together among the Maoris. It seems, therefore, highly probable that before the advent of the Maoris the North Island of New Zealand was occupied by a people of inferior culture belonging to the Melanesian stock, who may themselves have had a strain of Polynesian blood in their veins and some Polynesian words in their language. This at least is suggested by some features in the Maori traditions about them. For these savages told the Maoris that they were the descendants of the crews of three fishing canoes which had been driven to sea from their own land in past times, and that their original home was a much warmer country than New Zealand. All these various indications may perhaps be reconciled by supposing that the dark predecessors of the Maoris in New Zealand were a Melanesian people, who had accidentally drifted from Fiji, the inhabitants of which have long been in contact with their Polynesian neighbours on the east, the Tongans.[1] They

[1] Elsdon Best, "The Peopling of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) pp. 73-76. The Melanesian strain in the Maoris was recognised by previous writers. See J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders* (London, 1840), i. 6, "The nation consists of two aboriginal and distinct races, differing, at an earlier period, as much from each other as both are similarly removed in similitude from Europeans. A series of intermarriages for centuries has not even yet obliterated the marked difference that originally stamped the descendant of the now amalgamated races. The first may be known by a dark-brown complexion, well formed and prominent features, erect muscular proportions, and lank hair, with a boldness in the gait of a warrior, wholly differing from that of the second and inferior race, who have a complexion brown-black, hair inclining to the wool, like the Eastern African, stature short, and skin exceeding soft." The writer rightly connects the latter people with the stock which we now call Melanesian. Compare also R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 13 *sqq.*, who says (p. 13), "The Melanesian preceded the Polynesian. . . . The remains of this race are to be seen in every part of New Zealand, especially among the Nga-ti-ka-hunu, to which the derisive name of Pokerekahu — Black Kumara — is applied. The Maori traditions preserve both the names of the canoes which brought them to New Zealand, as well as of the chiefs who commanded them; several of these records make mention of their having found this black race in occupation of the country on their arrival." The blend-

received from the Maoris the name of Maruiwi,[1] and were perhaps of the same stock as the Moriori of the Chatham Islands; for two skulls of the Moriori type have been found in an old deposit at Wanganui, near the south end of the North Island of New Zealand.[2]

At the time of their discovery the Maoris had attained to a fair level of barbaric culture. They lived in comfortable houses ornamented with carved work and with scrolls painted in red and white on the posts and beams. Their villages were fortified with earthworks, palisades, and trenches, and surrounded by large gardens planted with sweet potatoes, taro, and melons.[3] "They excel in tillage,"

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ing of two distinct races, a light-brown and a dark race, among the Maoris is clearly recognised by E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 8-11. The dark race, he says (pp. 9 *sq.*), "has undoubtedly a different origin. This is proved by their less regularly shaped cranium, which is rather more compressed from the sides, by their full and large features, prominent cheek-bones, full lips, small ears, curly and coarse, although not woolly, hair, a much deeper colour of the skin, and a short and rather ill-proportioned figure. This race, which is mixed in insensible gradations with the former, is far less numerous; it does not predominate in any one part of the island, nor does it occupy any particular station in a tribe, and there is no difference made between the two races amongst themselves; but I must observe that I never met any man of consequence belonging to this race, and that, although free men, they occupy the lower grades; from this we may perhaps infer the relation in which they stood to the earliest native immigrants into the country, although their traditions and legends are silent on the subject."

[1] Elsdon Best, "The Peopling of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) pp. 73 *sq.*

[2] (Sir) Arthur Keith, "Moriori in New Zealand," *Man*, xiii. (1913) pp. 171 *sq.*

[3] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the Maoris*, p. 202. The elaborate system of fortification employed by the Maoris, of which the remains may be seen by thousands, seems to have no exact parallel in Polynesia. See Elsdon Best, "The Peopling of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) p. 75. These native forts or *pas*, as they were called, had often a double or even quadruple line of fence, the innermost formed by great poles twenty or thirty feet high, which were tightly woven together by the fibrous roots of a creeper. They were built by preference on hills, the sides of which were scarped and terraced to assist the defence. Some of them were very extensive and are said to have contained from one to two thousand inhabitants. Many of them were immensely strong and practically impregnable in the absence of artillery. It is believed that the habit of fortifying their villages was characteristic of the older race whom the Maoris, on landing in New Zealand, found in occupation of the country. See W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand* (London, 1835), pp. 122 *sqq.*; G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand* (London, 1847), i. 332 *sq.*; Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xii. no. 4 (December 1903), pp. 204 *sqq.*; W. H. Skinner, "The Ancient Fortified *Pa*," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xx. no. 78 (June 1911), pp. 71-77.

says Captain Cook, "as might naturally be expected, where the person that sows is to eat the produce, and where there is so little besides that can be eaten: when we first came to Tegadoo, a district between Poverty Bay and East Cape, their crops were just covered, and not yet begun to sprout; the mould was as smooth as in a garden, and every root had its small hillock, ranged in a regular quincunx, by lines, which with the pegs were still remaining in the field."[1] They understood the arts of irrigating their gardens[2] and of manuring them so as to render the soil light and porous and therefore better suited for the growth of the sweet potato, their favourite food. For this purpose they used sand, and in the Waikatoo district, where the root was formerly much cultivated, deep excavations, like the gravel pits of England, may still be seen, from which the natives extracted sand to fertilise their gardens.[3] Moreover, they cultivated various species of native flax and used the fibre for the manufacture of garments, first scraping it and drying it in the sun, then steeping it in water, and afterwards beating it with wooden mallets. Thus prepared the flax was dyed black or reddish brown and woven into cloth with broad borders of neat and varied patterns. The stronger and coarser fibres were made into string, lines, and cordage of all sorts.[4] The Maoris also built large and magnificently adorned canoes,[5] in which they made long voyages; for example, they invaded and conquered the Chatham Islands, which lie to the eastward across the open sea about five hundred miles distant from the nearest coast of New Zealand.[6] In hunting they had little opportunity to shine, for the simple reason that in their country there were no beasts to hunt except rats;[7] even

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), ii. 50.

[2] The ruins of native irrigation works are to be found in New Zealand as well as in other parts of Polynesia (J. Deniker, *The Races of Man*, p. 501).

[3] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 202 *sq.*

[4] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, ii. 30 *sq.*, 40 *sq.*; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand* (London, 1835), pp. 157 *sqq.*; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 204 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 5.

[5] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, ii. 47 *sq.*; W. Yate, *op. cit.* pp. 161 *sqq.*

[6] A. Shand, "The Occupation of the Chatham Islands by the Maoris in 1835," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. i. no. 2 (July 1892), pp. 83 *sqq.*

[7] R. Taylor, *op. cit.* p. 496; A. R. Wallace, *Australasia* (London, 1913), pp. 442 *sq.*

birds they could not shoot, because they had no bows and arrows to shoot them with,[1] but they made some amends by catching them in ingeniously constructed snares.[2] They caught fish both with nets, some of which were of enormous size, and with hooks made of bone or shell.[3] They displayed great skill and infinite patience in fashioning, sharpening, and polishing their stone implements and weapons.[4] In council they were orators, and in the battle-field warriors whose courage has merited the respect, and whose military skill has won the admiration of the British troops opposed to them.[5] In short, the Maoris were and are one of the most highly gifted among the many uncivilised peoples which the English race, in its expansion over the world, has met and subdued. It is therefore of peculiar interest to learn what conceptions they had formed of man's spiritual nature and his relations to the higher powers.

§ 3. *The Beliefs of the Maoris concerning the Souls of the Living*

Like most other peoples, whether savage or civilised, the Maoris explained the mystery of life in man by the presence of an invisible spirit or soul, which animates his body during life and quits it at death to survive the separation for a longer or shorter time either in this world or another. But like many others who have sought to fathom this profound subject, the Maoris would seem to have experienced some difficulty in ascertaining the precise nature of the human soul. When the natural man, on the strength of his native faculties, essays to explore these dark abysses and to put his vague thoughts into words, he commonly compares his soul

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 212; Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maori of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xi. no. 4 (December 1902), p. 240.

[2] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 212 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 442 *sq.*

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, i. 49 *sq.*; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 160.

[4] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, ii. 49; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 4.

[5] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 4. The Maoris delivered set speeches composed according to certain recognised laws of rhetoric, and their oratory was distinguished by a native eloquence and grace. See E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 186 *sqq.*

either to his breath or to his shadow and his reflection, and not content with a simple comparison he is led, by a natural confusion of thought, to identify more or less closely the imperceptible entity which he calls his soul with one or both of these perceptible objects. To this general rule the Maori is apparently no exception. He has two words which he specially uses to designate the human spirit or soul: one is *wairua*, the other is *hau*.[1] Of these words, *wairua*, the more usual name, is said to mean also a shadow, an unsubstantial image, a reflection, as of a person's face from a polished surface;[2] and we may surmise that these were the original and proper meanings of the term. Similarly *hau*, which is described as "the vital essence or life principle" in man,[3] appears primarily to mean "wind,"[4] from which we may infer that in its application to man it denotes properly the breath. The idea of the soul as a breath appears in the explanation which was given to Dumont d'Urville of the Maori form of salutation by rubbing noses together. The French traveller was told that the real intention of this salute was to mingle the breath and thereby the souls of the persons who gave each other this token of friendship. But as his informant was not a Maori but a certain Mr. Kendall, the truth of the explanation remains doubtful, though the Frenchman believed that he obtained confirmation of it from his own observation and the testimony of a native.[5] On the other hand the comparison of the soul to a shadow comes out in the answer given by a Maori to an Englishman who had asked him why his people did not prevent their souls from passing away to the nether world. The Maori replied by pointing to the Englishman's shadow on the wall and asking him whether he could catch it.[6]

Thus far the Maori conception of the soul does not perhaps differ very materially from the popular notion of it

[1] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), pp. 177 *sqq.*, 189 *sqq.*

[2] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 591 *sq.*, *s.v.* "wairua."

[3] Elsdon Best, *op. cit.* p. 189.

[4] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 52, *s.v.* "hau"; Elsdon Best, *op. cit.* p. 190.

[5] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 558 *sq.*

[6] William Brown, *New Zealand and its Aborigines* (London, 1845), p. 81.

current among ourselves. But we come now to a marked difference between the Maori idea of the soul and our own. For whereas the European commonly believes his soul to be fixed during life immovably in his body, and only to depart from it once for all at death, the soul of the Maori is under no such narrow restrictions, but is free to quit its bodily mansion at pleasure and to return to it without prejudice to the life and health of its owner. For example, the Maori explains a dream by supposing that the soul of the sleeper has left his body behind and rambled away to places more or less distant, where it converses with the spirits of other people, whether alive or dead. Hence no well-bred Maori would waken a sleeper suddenly by shaking him or calling out to him in a loud voice. If he must rouse him, he will do it gradually, speaking to him at first in low tones and then raising his voice by degrees, in order to give the truant soul fair warning and allow it to return at leisure.[1] Believing in the power of the soul to wander far away and converse with other spiritual beings in sleep, the Maoris naturally paid great attention to dreams, which they fancied were often sent them by the gods to warn them of coming events. All dreams were supposed to have their special significance, and the Maoris had framed a fanciful system for interpreting them. Sometimes, as with ourselves, the interpretation went by contraries. For example, if a man dreamed that he saw a sick relative at the point of death, it was a sign that the patient would soon recover; but if, on the contrary, the sufferer appeared in perfect health, it was an omen of his approaching end. When a priest was in doubt as to the intentions of the higher powers, he usually waited for his god to reveal his will in a dream, and accepted the vagaries of his slumbering fancy as an infallible intimation of the divine pleasure. Spells were commonly recited in order to annul the effect of ill-omened dreams.[2]

But the departure of the soul from the body in life was

[1] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), pp. 177 *sq.*

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 333-335. As to omens derived from dreams see Elsdon Best, "Omens and Superstitious Beliefs of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. vii. no. 27 (September 1898), pp. 124 *sqq.*

not always voluntary; it might take place under the compulsion of a hostile sorcerer or magician. In a Maori legend called *The curse of Manaia* we read that "the priests next dug a long pit, termed the pit of wrath, into which by their enchantments they might bring the spirits of their enemies, and hang them and destroy them there; and when they had dug the pit, muttering the necessary incantations, they took large shells in their hands to scrape the spirits of their enemies into the pit with, whilst they muttered enchantments; and when they had done this, they scraped the earth into the pit again to cover them up, and beat down the earth with their hands, and crossed the pit with enchanted cloths, and wove baskets of flax-leaves to hold the spirits of the foes which they had thus destroyed, and each of these acts they accompanied with the proper spells."[1]

This mode of undoing an enemy by extracting and killing his soul was not with the Maoris a mere legendary fiction; it was practised in real life by their wizards. For we are told that when a priest desired to slay a person by witchcraft, he would often dig a hole in the ground, and standing over it with a cord in his hand would let one end of the cord hang down into the hole. He then recited an incantation which compelled the soul of the doomed man to swarm down the cord into the pit, whereupon another potent spell chanted by the magician speedily put an end to the poor soul for good and all.[2]

It seems obvious that spells of this sort may be used with great advantage in war, for if you can only contrive to kill the souls of your foes, their mere bodies will probably give you little or no trouble. Nor did this practical application of the magic art escape the sagacity of the Maoris. When they marched to attack an enemy's stronghold, it was an ancient custom to halt and kindle a fire, over which the priest recited certain spells to cause the souls of his adversaries to be drawn into the fire and there to perish miserably in the flames. In theory the idea was admirable, but unfortunately it did not always work out in practice.

[1] Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology* (London, 1855), pp. 168 *sq.*

[2] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), p. 187.

For magic is a game at which two can play, and it sometimes happened that the spells of the besieged proved more powerful than those of the besiegers and enabled the garrison to defy all the attempts of the enemy to filch their souls from their bodies.[1] But even when the assailants were obliged to retire discomfited, they did not always lose heart, the resources of the magic art were not yet exhausted. On their return home the priest, nothing daunted by a temporary discomfiture, might betake himself again to his spells, and by crooning his incantations over a garment or a weapon belonging to one of his party, might dash in pieces the arms of the enemy and cause their souls to perish. Thus by his ghostly skill would he snatch victory from defeat, and humble the pride of the insolent foe in the very moment of his imaginary triumph.[2] One way in which he effected his purpose was to take a bag or basket containing some sacred food, hold it to the fire, and then opening the bag point the mouth of it in the direction of the enemy. The simple recitation of a spell then sufficed to draw the souls of the adversaries into the bag, after which nothing was easier for him than to destroy them utterly by means of the appropriate incantation.[3]

But valuable as are these applications of magic to practical life, the art, like every good thing, is liable to abuse; and even where it is employed with the best intentions, the forces which it controls are so powerful that in spite of all precautions an accident will sometimes happen. For example, in sickness the patient often had recourse to a priest, who would lead him down to the nearest water, whether a pool or a stream, and there perform the magical rites necessary for the relief of his particular malady. While the wizard was engaged in this beneficent task, all the people in the village kept strictly indoors, lest their souls should wander forth to the water-side and there colliding, if I may be allowed the expression, with the mystic forces

[1] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), p. 181.

[2] Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maori of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xi. no. 3 (September 1902), p. 141.

[3] Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maori of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xii. no. 2 (June 1903), p. 72.

of the priest's spells be damaged or even annihilated by the collision.[1] In such a case the fatal consequences were the result of a pure accident, but sometimes they were intentional. For this fell purpose a malignant wizard would dig a hole, invoke the spirit of the man against whom he had a grudge, and when the spirit appeared over the hole in the form of a light, he would curse it, and the man whose soul was cursed would be sure to die, sooner or later; nothing could save him. The Uriwera, who dwelt dispersed among the forests and lonely hills of a wild mountainous region in the North Island, were reputed to be the greatest warlocks in all New Zealand. When they descended from their mountains to the coast, the lowlanders scarcely dared refuse them anything for fear of incurring their displeasure. It is said that in their magical rites they made a special use of the spittle of their destined victims; hence all visitors to their country were careful to conceal their spittle lest they should give these wicked folk a handle against them.[2] Another mode in which a Maori wizard could obtain power over a man's soul was by working magic on the footprints of his intended victim. The thing was done in this way. Suppose you are walking and leave your footprints behind you on the ground. I come behind you, take up the earth from your footprints, and deposit it on the sacred *whata puaroa*, that is, a post or pillar set up in the holy place of a village and charged in a mysterious manner with the vitality both of the people and of the land. Having laid the earth from your footprints on the sacred post, I next perform a ceremony of consecration over it, and then bury it with a seed of sweet potato in the ground. After that you are doomed. You may consider yourself for all practical purposes not only dead but buried, like the earth from your footprints.[3]

From some of the foregoing facts it seems to follow that the souls of the Maoris are not, so to say, constitu-

[1] Elsdon Best, "Maori Medical Lore," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xiii. no. 4 (December 1904), p. 225.

[2] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand* (London, 1843), ii. 58 *sq.*; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 116 *sq.*; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology* (London, 1882), p. 31.

[3] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), pp. 194 *sq.*, 196.

tionally immortal, but that they are of a brittle and perishable nature, and that in particular they are liable to be cut short in their career and totally exterminated by the insidious arts of magicians. So frequently, indeed, did this happen in former days that the Maoris of old apparently recognised no other cause of death, but imagined that every man and woman would naturally live for ever, if the thread of his or her life were not prematurely snipped by the abhorred shears of some witch or wizard. Hence after every death it was customary to hold an inquest in order to discover the wretch who had brought about the catastrophe by his enchantments; a sage presided at the solemn enquiry, and under his direction the culprit was detected, hunted down, and killed.[1]

The Maoris tell a story to explain how death first came into the world, or at least how men were prevented from enjoying the boon of immortality. The story runs as follows.

The great mythical hero of Polynesia is Maui, a demi-god or man of marvellous powers, who lived in the early ages of the world, and whose mighty deeds are the theme of tales of wonder told far and wide among the islands of the Pacific.[2] In his childhood his mother prophesied that he should thereafter climb the threshold of his great ancestress Hine-nui-te-po, and that death should have no more dominion over men. A happy prediction, but alas! never destined to be fulfilled, for even the would-be saviour Maui himself did not escape the doom of mortality. The way in which he became subject to death was this. His father took him to the water to be baptized, for infant baptism was a regular part of Maori ritual.[3] But when the

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 51.

[2] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 233 *sqq.*, *s.v.* "Maui"; Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition*, *Ethnography and Philology* (Philadelphia, 1846), p. 23.

[3] J. L. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand* (London, 1817), i. 61 *sq.*, "The New Zealanders make it an invariable practice, when a child is born among them, to take it to the *Tohunga*, or priest, who sprinkles it on the face with water, from a certain leaf which he holds in his hand for that purpose; and they believe that this ceremony is not only beneficial to the infant, but that the neglect of it would be attended with the most baneful consequences. In the latter case, they consider the child as either doomed to immediate death, or that, if allowed to live, it will grow up with a most perverse and wicked

baptism was over and the usual prayers had been offered for making the lad sacred and clean from all impurity, his father bethought him that through haste or forgetfulness he had omitted some of the prayers and purifications of the baptismal service. It was a fatal oversight, and the anxious father was struck with consternation at the thought, for too well he knew that the gods would punish the omission by causing his son Maui to die.[1] Yet did his son make a brave attempt to rescue all men from the doom of death and to make them live for ever. One day, after he had performed many feats and returned to his father's house, his father, heavy at heart and overcome with a foreboding of evil, said to him, "Oh, my son, I have heard from your mother and others that you are very valiant, and that you have succeeded in all feats that you have undertaken in your own country, whether they were small or great; but now that you have arrived in your father's country, you will perhaps be overcome." Then Maui asked his father, "What do you mean? what things are there that I can be vanquished by?" And his father answered him, "By your great ancestress, by Hine-nui-te-po, who, if you look, you may see flashing, and, as it were, opening and shutting there, where the horizon meets the sky." And Maui answered, "Lay aside such idle thoughts, and let us both fearlessly seek whether men are to die or live for ever." And his father said, "My child, there has been an ill omen for us; when I was baptizing you, I omitted a portion of the fitting prayers, and that I know will be the cause of your perishing." Then Maui asked his father, "What is my ancestress Hine-nui-te-po like?" and he answered, "What you see yonder shining so brightly red are her eyes, and her teeth are as sharp and hard as pieces of volcanic

disposition." Before or after sprinkling the child with water the priest bestowed on the infant its name. See W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand* (London, 1835), pp. 82-84; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand* (London, 1859), i. 118 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, Second Edition (London, 1870), pp. 184 *sqq.* Compare J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse*, *Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 443 *sq.* (who says that the baptism was performed by women); E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand* (London, 1843), ii. 28-30 (who, in contradiction to all the other authorities, says that the naming of the child was unconnected with its baptism).

[1] Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology* (London, 1855), p. 32.

glass; her body is like that of a man, and as for the pupils of her eyes, they are jasper; and her hair is like the tangles of long sea-weed, and her mouth is like that of a barracouta."

Now Hine-nui-te-po was the Great Woman of Night, the Goddess of Death, who dwelt in the nether world and dragged down men to herself. But Maui was not afraid, for he had caught the great Sun himself in a snare and beaten him and caused him to go so tardily as we now see him creeping across the sky with leaden steps and slow; for of old the Sun was wont to speed across the firmament like a young man rejoicing to run a race. So forth fared the hero on his great enterprise to snatch the life of mortals from the very jaws of death. And there came to him to bear him company the small robin, and the large robin, and the thrush, and the yellow hammer, and the pied fantail (*tiwakawaka*, *Rhipidura flabellifora*), and every kind of little bird; and these all assembled together, and they started with Maui in the evening, and arrived at the dwelling of Hine-nui-te-po, and found her fast asleep.

Then Maui addressed them all, and said, "My little friends, now if you see me creep into this old chieftainess, do not laugh at what you see. Nay, nay, do not, I pray you, but when I have got altogether inside her, and just as I am coming out of her mouth, then you may shout with laughter if you please." But his little friends were frightened at what they saw, and they answered, "Oh, sir, you will certainly be killed." And he answered them again, saying, "If you burst out laughing at me as soon as I get inside her, you will wake her up, and she will certainly kill me at once; but if you do not laugh until I am quite inside her, and am on the point of coming out of her mouth, I shall live, and Hine-nui-te-po will die." And his little friends answered, "Go on then, brave sir, but pray take good care of yourself."

Then the young hero started off, and twisted the strings of his weapon tight round his wrist, and went into the house, and stripped off his clothes, and the skin on his hips was as mottled and beautiful as the skin of a mackerel by reason of the tattoo marks cut on it with the chisel of Uetongo, and he entered the old chieftainess. The little birds now screwed

up their little mouths to keep back their laughter when they saw him disappearing into the body of the giantess; their cheeks swelled up and grew purple, and they almost choked with suppressed emotion. At last the pied fantail could bear it no longer, and he suddenly exploded with a loud guffaw. That woke the old woman, she opened her eyes, and shut her jaws with a snap, cutting the hero clean through the middle, so that his legs dropped out of her mouth. Thus died Maui, but before he died he begat children, and sons were born to him, and some of his descendants are alive to this day. That, according to Maori tradition, is how death came into the world; for if only Maui had passed safely through the jaws of the Goddess of Death, men would have died no more and death itself would have been destroyed. Thus the Maoris set down human mortality at the door of the pied fantail, since but for his unseasonable merriment we might all have lived for ever.[1]

§ 4. *The Beliefs of the Maoris concerning the Souls of the Dead*

When a chief died, a loud howl or wail announced the melancholy event, and the neighbours flocked to the scene of death to testify their sorrow. The wives and near relations, especially the women, of the deceased displayed their anguish by cutting their faces, arms, legs, and breasts with flints or shells till the blood flowed down in streams; it was not wiped off, for the more the person of a mourner was covered with clotted gore, the greater was esteemed his or her respect for the dead. Sometimes relatives would hack off joints of their fingers as a token of grief. Mourners likewise cut their hair, the men generally contenting themselves with clipping or shaving it on one side only, from the forehead to the neck. The eyes of the dead were closed by the nearest relative; and the body dressed in the finest mats, decked

[1] Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology*, pp. 56-58; John White, *The Ancient History of the Maori* (Wellington and London, 1887–1889), ii. 98, 105-107. For another version of the myth, told with some minor variations, see S. Percy Smith, *The Lore of the Whare-wānanga*, Part I. (New Plymouth, N.Z., 1913), pp. 145 *sq.*, 176-178. For the identification of the bird *tiwakawaka* see E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 519, *s.v.* "Tiwaiwaka."

with feathers, and provided with weapons, lay in state for a time. After the first day a brother of the deceased used to beat the body with fresh flax gathered for the purpose; this he did to drive away any evil thing that might be hovering about the corpse. In the olden time one or more of the chief's wives would strangle themselves, that their souls might accompany their dead lord and wait upon him in the other world, and with the same intentions slaves were killed, lest the great man should lack attendants in the spirit land.[1]

The body was kept for three days because, we are told, the soul was believed not to quit its mortal habitation till the third day.[2] The mode of disposing of the corpse differed in different districts and according to the rank of the deceased. In some places a grave was dug in the house and the body buried in a sitting posture, the legs being kept in that position by bandages or doubled up against the chest. In the grave the dead man retained the fine garments in which he had been dressed together with the family ornaments of jade and shark's teeth. With him also was usually interred his property, especially the clothes which he had worn and everything else that had touched him during his last illness. The weapons of a warrior were laid near him that he might be able to fight his battles in the spirit land. In other places the corpse was laid in a box on a stage; or two pieces of an old canoe were set upright in the earth, and in the hollow between them the body was seated on a grating so as to allow the products of decomposition to drip through on the ground. In other places again, the corpse was laid in a sort of canoe-shaped coffin and deposited among the branches of a tree in a grove, where it remained for several months. This burial in the branches of a tree seems to

[1] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 135 *sqq.*; J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 541 *sq.*; Servant, "Notice sur la Nouvelle-Zélande," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xv. (1843) p. 25; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 62, 118; W. Brown, *New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, pp. 15 *sqq.*; G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, i. 331; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, i. 185 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, Second Edition (London, 1870), pp. 217 *sq.*; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) pp. 104 *sq.*

[2] J. Dumont d'Urville, *op. cit.* ii. 541.

have been usually adopted for the bodies of commoners; the corpses of chiefs, enclosed in coffins, were placed in mausoleums, carved and painted red, which were raised on pillars. Whether buried in the earth or placed in a tree or on a stage, the body was left until the flesh had so far decayed as to permit of the bones being easily detached; there was no fixed time allowed for decomposition, it might vary from three months to six months, or even a year. When decay was thought to have proceeded far enough, the bones were dug up or taken down from the stage or tree and scraped; the ornaments also were removed from the skeleton and worn by the relatives. In the south, where the custom was to bury the dead in the ground, this disinterment took place four weeks after the burial; the bones were then buried again, but only to be dug up again after a longer interval, it might be two years, for the final ceremony. When this took place, all the friends and relatives of the dead were summoned to assist, and a great feast was given: the bones were scraped, painted red, decked with feathers, and wrapped up in mats. The precious bundle was then deposited in a small canoe or a miniature house elevated on a pole; or it was carried to the top of some sacred tree and there left on a small stage. Sometimes the bones were concealed in a hollow tree in a secret place of the forest, or hidden away in one of the numerous limestone caverns or in some lonely and inaccessible chasm among the rocks. The motive for secret burial was a fear lest an enemy should get possession of the bones and profane them by making fish-hooks out of them or converting the skull into a baler for his canoe. Such a profanation was deemed a deadly insult to the surviving relatives. After a burial the persons who had dressed or carried the corpse, and all indeed who had had anything to do with it, repaired to the nearest stream and plunged themselves several times over head in the water.[1]

[1] J. Dumont d'Urville, *op. cit.* ii. 543 *sq.*; W. Yate, *op. cit.* p. 137; Servant, "Notice sur la Nouvelle-Zélande," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xv. (1843) p. 25; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 62 *sqq.*; G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, i. 331; A. S. Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand*, i. 188; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 218 *sqq.*; E. Tregear, "The Maori of

In some districts the removal of the bones from their temporary to their final resting-place was the occasion of a grand annual festival in which several neighbouring tribes took part. The bones of all members of the tribes who had died within the year were taken down from the stages or trees where the bodies had been temporarily deposited. The grave-clothes having been removed, the mouldering remains were wrapped in new blankets and carried in procession, attended by the crowd, to a place where they were deposited on a carpet of leaves. Should any putrid flesh be found still adhering to the bones, it was scraped off and buried on the spot. A few old women, dressed in their best, oiled from head to foot, and plastered with raddle, received the skulls into their laps. While they held them thus, a funeral ode was sung and speeches, loud and long, were delivered. Then the bones were tied up, decked with feathers of the gannet, rolled up in blankets, and carried to their last place of rest in a sacred grove, where they were left, securely fastened up and gaudily decorated with red and white. Having thus discharged their duty to the dead, the living gave themselves up to festivity; they ate and drank, danced, sang, whistled, wrestled, quarrelled, bought and sold. This Holy Fair, which went by the name of Hahunga, lasted several days. At the end of it the mourners, or revellers, dispersed and returned to their homes, laden with food which had been made ready for them by their hosts.[1] Great importance was attached to the final disposal of the remains of the dead. According to one account, the soul of the dead man could not rest till his bones were laid in the sepulchre of his ancestors, which was often a natural cave or grotto. There they were deposited on a shelf or platform a few feet above the floor of the cavern.[2]

New Zealand," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) p. 105; Elsdon Best, "Cremation among the Maori Tribes of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) p. 110.

[1] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 137-139; Servant, "Notice sur la Nouvelle-Zélande," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xv. (1843) pp. 26 *sq.* The name *Hahunga* is doubtless connected with the verb *hahu*, which means "to exhume the bones of dead persons before depositing them in their final resting-place." See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 42, *s.v.* "hahu."

[2] J. Dumont d'Urville, *op. cit.* ii. 543, 545.

Not uncommonly the bones of the dead, instead of being preserved, were burned.[1] But cremation, though not unusual, seems never to have been a general custom with the Maoris. They resorted to it only in exceptional circumstances, for example, in order to stay the spread of disease, or in cases where a tribe occupied open country and found no suitable place where to lay the bones of their dead after exhumation. Cremation for the latter reason is said to have been practised by the Ngati-apa tribe in the Rangatikikei District, and also by the tribes who occupied the Waimate Plains. An old earthwork fort near the present township of Manaia was the scene of many cremations of the Maori dead in former days. Again, it was a common custom for a raiding party to cremate their dead in the enemy's country, when there was no time to carry them home for the usual obsequies. The intention of burning them was to prevent the enemy from eating the bodies and making fish-hooks out of the bones. For a similar reason even the wounded, whom they could not carry with them, were sometimes thrown into great fires and burnt alive. If the slain man was a chief, only his body would be consumed in the flames; his head would be cut off, steamed, cured, and carried home, to be wept over by his friends. In the Bay of Plenty district the bodies of persons who died of a certain disease called *Kai uaua*, apparently consumption, used to be burnt to prevent the spread of the malady, and all the ashes were carefully buried.[2]

Often enough the heads of dead relatives were cut off, dried, and preserved by the family for many years in order to be occasionally brought forth and mourned over. Sometimes a widow would sleep with her husband's severed head at her side. After a victory, too, it was customary to decapitate the slain foes and dry their heads, which were then carried home and used as scarecrows or stuck on short stakes in the village, where they were jeered at and reviled. When the time came to plant the sweet potatoes, and the priests recited their spells for the sake of the crops, the dried

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 220. This was called *tahunga*, "burning," a word no doubt derived from *tahu*, "to set on fire, kindle." See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 444, *s.v.* "tahu."

[2] Elsdon Best, "Cremation amongst the Maori tribes of New Zealand," *Man*, xiv. (1914) pp. 110 *sq.*

heads were sometimes brought out and placed at the edge of the field, for this was believed to promote the growth of the sweet potatoes.[1] Apparently the spirits of the dead were thought able to quicken the fruits of the earth.

At all events the Maoris undoubtedly believed that the souls of the departed survive the death of their bodies for a longer or shorter time and in their disembodied state can influence the living for weal or woe. The belief in the survival of the soul is strikingly manifested in their old custom of killing widows and slaves to serve dead chiefs in the other world. It found expression in the more harmless custom of laying food beside a dead person or burying it with him in the grave; but, as usually happens in such cases, the ghost only consumed the spiritual essence of the victuals, considerately leaving the gross material substance to be despatched by the priest.[2] A dying Maori, unable to eat a loaf which a missionary had offered to him, begged that it might be kept for his ghost, who, after his death, would come and fortify himself with it for the journey to his long home.[3] At Tanaraki the child of a chief was buried in its father's house, grasping in each of its little fists a taro for consumption in the other world. Over the grave were laid boards, and the family slept on them. When they thought that the child's body was sufficiently decayed, they dug it up, scraped the bones, and hung them in the verandah, where from time to time the priest recited spells to assist the soul in its ascent to heaven. Every spell was supposed to raise the soul one stage nearer to the abode of bliss. But the ascent was long and tedious, for there were no less than ten heavens one above the other; the tenth was believed to be the principal abode of the gods. When the parents of the child who had been despatched to the happy land with taro in each hand were asked, "Why taro, if the little one is gone to heaven?" they answered that they were not quite sure whether it went up or down, and therefore as

[1] Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maori of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xii. no. 4 (December 1903), pp. 195-197. Compare W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 130 *sqq.*; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 66.

[2] J. Dumont d'Urville, *op. cit.* ii. 542; G. F. Angas, *op. cit.* ii. 71; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 220.

[3] J. Dumont d'Urville, *l.c.*

an additional precaution they planted a seed of taro in the grave, so that their offspring might find something to eat either above or below.[1]

Similar ceremonies were performed to facilitate the ascension of the souls of chiefs and priests. Before the body was taken to the place of burial, it was laid out with its feet towards the north, and all the blood-relations of the deceased, men, women, and children, assembled round it. Then the priest, standing at the head of the corpse, between the rows of the people, chanted two incantations, of which the second was supposed to assist the soul to ascend to heaven. The priest next put a bulb of taro in the left hand of the corpse and chanted another incantation. After that, flaxen cords were tied with a slip-knot to a tassel of the mat in which the body was enshrouded, and a cord was placed in the hand of each child, boy and girl, present at the ceremony. When the priest had chanted one more incantation, each child pulled the cord with a jerk, to disconnect the soul from the body, lest it should remain and afflict the relatives.[2] This last rite, with the reason assigned for it, is significant at once of the dread which the Maoris felt for departed spirits, and of the very materialistic conception which they entertained of the human soul, since they appear to have imagined that it could be detached from the body by jerking at a cord.

The wish to raise the soul to heaven was perhaps the motive for another curious rite performed at the obsequies of a chief. When the body had been buried, the chief returned to the village; but the men who had carried the body went to the nearest swamp, and having caught a swamp-sparrow (*matata*) sent word to the priest, who forthwith rejoined them. Each of the bearers was then provided with a stick to which certain of the feathers of the bird were tied. Then, holding the sticks in their hands, they sat on their heels in a row opposite the priest, who stood facing the east with a stick similarly adorned in his left hand. Next he moved to the south end of the row of men and chanted,

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 220.

[2] John White, "A Chapter from Maori Mythology," *Report of the Third Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Christchurch, New Zealand, in January 1891*, pp. 362 *sq.*

and as he chanted he gradually raised his stick, while at the same time all the bearers, holding their sticks at arm's length, gradually raised them and their bodies simultaneously, keeping perfect time, till the priest had concluded his chant, when they all stood erect with outstretched arms. After that the priest collected the sticks and threw them down in front of the *mua*, which seems to have been a kind of altar.[1] We may surmise that the ceremony was intended to waft the soul of the dead chief upward, the feathers of the bird being naturally fitted to facilitate its heavenward flight.

At other times, however, with the inconsistency so common in such matters, it appears to have been supposed that the soul set out on its far journey across the sea, and steps were accordingly taken to equip it for the voyage. Thus we hear of a *wahi tapu* or sacred repository of the property of a deceased chief, which contained, among other things, a little canoe with sail and paddles, "to serve as a ferry-boat for the spirit to enter in safety into the eternal abodes." Nevertheless in the same enclosure, which was fenced with a double set of palings, "calabashes of food and water, and a dish prepared from the pigeon, were placed for the ghost to regale itself when visiting the spot; and the heathen natives aver that at night the spirit comes and feeds from the sacred calabashes."[2]

Many people in the Taranaki district thought that souls went neither up nor down, but always stayed near their mouldering bodies. Hence the sacred grove in which their remains were buried was full of disembodied spirits; and when a man died a violent death his soul wandered about disconsolate, till a priest by his spells and enchantments had brought the poor ghost within the spiritual fold.[3]

When a chief was killed in battle and eaten by his foes, as often happened, his departed spirit entered the stones of the oven in which his body had been cooked, and the stones retained their heat so long as the ghost was in them. Meanwhile his sorrowing friends at home recited their most potent

[1] John White, "A Chapter from Maori Mythology," *op. cit.* p. 363. As to the meaning of *mua*, see E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 267, *s.v.* "mua."

[2] G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, ii. 70 *sq.*

[3] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 220 *sq.*

spells to draw his soul out of the oven and back to the sacred grove (*wahi tapu*), the burial-place of his people; for otherwise the soul could find no repose, but must roam about for ever, wreaking its spite on the living, for all disembodied spirits were deemed malicious. Hence after a battle, if people could not obtain the body of a slain friend, they sought to procure at least some drops of his blood or shreds of his raiment, that by crooning over them the appropriate spell they might draw home the vagrant spirit to his place of rest. The burial-grounds were regarded with awe and fear, for sometimes a restless ghost would break bounds and spread sickness among the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Within their sacred precincts stood altars or stages for offerings to the gods, and any living man who entered them did so at his peril. For the same reason no one would set foot in a house where a dead man or woman had been buried. Hence in nearly every village half the houses stood empty and deserted, falling into decay, tenanted only by ghosts. The living had constantly before their eyes the mansions of the dead.[1]

The common belief of the Maoris seems to have been that the souls of the dead pass away to a region of the underworld, which was sometimes called Po and sometimes Reinga. Properly speaking, Po was night or the primaeval darkness out of which all forms of life and light were evolved or created;[2] and Reinga was not so much the spirit land itself as the leaping-off place where the souls bade good-bye to earth and took their departure for the far country. This leaping-off place was at the North Cape, the Land's End of New Zealand. The cape terminates in a steep cliff with a sea-cave at its foot, into which the tide rushes with a thunderous roar. There the evil spirit Wiro is thought to dwell, lurking for his prey; for he battens on such of the passing souls of the dead as he can get into his clutches. On their passage to the North Cape the ghosts stop by the way at two hills; at the first, which is called Wai-hokimai, they wail, cut themselves, and strip off their clothes; at the second, which is called Wai-otioti, they turn

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 221.

[2] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 342, *s.v.* "Po."

their backs on the land of the living and set their faces to the land of the dead. Arrived at the cape they pass outward over a long narrow ledge of rock and then leap down on a flat stone. There they see a mass of sea-weed floating on the water, its roots hidden in the depth, its upper branches clinging to a *pohutukawa* tree. When they perceive an opening in the sea-weed they dive and soon find themselves in the lower world. But before they reach the abode of spirits they must cross a river by a plank; the river is called Waiorotane or the River of the Water of Life; and sometimes the warden of the plank will not suffer the ghosts to pass the river, but drives them back with friendly violence and bids them return to their friends on earth. Such souls come back to the bright world of light and life, and tell their friends what they have seen and heard on the journey to that bourne from which so many travellers return no more. Hence when any one has recovered from a dangerous sickness or escaped some great peril, they say of him that he has come back from the River of the Water of Life. Even if a soul has crossed that sombre stream, he may still return to the land of the living, if only he refuses to partake of the food set before him by the ghosts; but should he taste of it, he cannot come back. They say that people living near the North Cape can hear the spirits of the dead passing through the air on their way to the spirit land; and in the old days, when a battle had been fought and before the news of it could reach them by word of mouth, the natives near the cape were made aware of what had happened by the rushing sound of a great multitude flitting by overhead in the darkness.[1] Perhaps the sighing of the night-wind or the clangour of birds of passage winging their way out to sea may have contributed to create or foster these fancies.

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 150 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, p. 45; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 52, 231; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 140; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 66 *sq.*; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xix. (1890) pp. 118 *sq.*; *id.*, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 407 *sq.*, 591, *s.vv.* "Reinga" and "Waiora"; John White, "A Chapter from Maori Mythology," *Report of the Third Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Christchurch, New Zealand, in January 1891*, pp. 361 *sq.*

On the day after a burial the priest used to perform a ceremony to facilitate the passage of the soul to its final rest. For this purpose some men would go out in the morning and kill a small bird of the swamps called *kokata* and pluck up some reeds of a certain sort (*wiwi*). These they brought to the priest at the grave. He asked them, "Whence came ye?" They answered, "From the seeking, from the searching." He asked them again, "Ah! what have you got? ah! what have you gained?" Then the men threw the bird and the reeds on the ground. Next the priest chose a stalk of grass or fern and put it near the grave in a direction pointing towards Hawaiki, the land far away from which the forefathers of the Maoris came long ago. Another stalk of grass or fern was laid near the place of death, and along these stalks the soul of the dead man travelled to rejoin his friends and kinsfolk who had gone before.[1]

As might be anticipated, the accounts which the Maoris gave of the spirit world and of life in it were neither clear nor consistent. According to one account, while the heavens increase in beauty as they ascend one above the other, the lower regions increase in darkness and horror as they descend, each being darker and worse than the one above it, till in the lowest of all complete darkness reigns. There the souls, deprived alike of light and food, wasted away and ultimately ceased to exist; or according to another account they assumed the shape of worms and in that guise returned to earth, where they died a second death and so finally perished. But it was only the souls of common folk which came to this melancholy end. Chiefs and priests were believed to be descended from the gods, and at death their souls ascended to heaven, there to live for ever.[2]

Other reports, however, paint the nether world in more

[1] E. Shortland, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, p. 44. Such a stalk to aid the spirit on its passage was called a *tiri*. Compare E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 517, *s.v.* "Tiri." The ceremony described in the text resembles in some points the one which seems intended to raise the soul of the deceased to heaven. See above, p. 25.

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 232; John White, "A Chapter from Maori Mythology," *Report of the Third Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Christchurch, New Zealand, in January 1891*, pp. 361 *sq.*

cheerful colours. We are told that the souls of the dead live there very much as people do on earth, but all good things are more plentiful there than here. The staple food of the ghosts is sweet potatoes, and the quality of the potatoes appears to be remarkably fine; for once a woman, who had the good fortune to go to the spirit land and come back, received from her dead father in the nether regions two roots of sweet potatoes of a most prodigious size. These the ghost told her to take back to earth and plant for the benefit of his grandchild. So she hurried away with them and arriving at the foot of the North Cape had begun to clamber up the face of the cliff, when two infant spirits overtook her and attempted to drag her back to dead land by tugging at her cloak. To divert their attention she threw the two roots of sweet potato behind her, and while the sprites were munching them she made good her escape up the cliff and succeeded in reaching home. Her friends were very glad to see her again, but they always lamented that she had not brought back at least one of those gigantic roots of sweet potato, since it would unquestionably have done much to improve the quality of sweet potatoes grown here on earth.[1]

But the spirits of the dead are by no means strictly confined to the lower world; they can quit it from time to time and return to earth, there to influence the actions and fortunes of the living and to communicate with them through the priest, who can hear their voices. They speak in whistling tones, which even common folk can sometimes distinguish as they walk about in the dark. Often their communications are made to the priest or chief in dreams, and he announces the glad or mournful tidings to other people in the morning. Any commands conveyed in this manner from the other world are, or used to be, implicitly obeyed and might decide the course to be pursued in the most important affairs of life.[2] In some tribes, especially among the natives of Wangunui, it used to be customary

[1] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 48 *sq.*, 67, 118; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 153 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 233 *sq.*

[2] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 67, 118; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, ii. 83, 84.

to keep in the houses small carved images of wood, each of them dedicated to an ancestor of the family, who was believed occasionally to enter into the image in order to hold converse with his living descendants.[1] But even without the intervention of such images the priest could summon up the spirits of the dead and converse with them in the presence of the relatives or of strangers; at these interviews, which were held within doors and in the dark, the voices of the ghosts, or perhaps of the priestly ventriloquist, were sometimes distinctly audible even to sceptical Europeans. Nor was the art of necromancy confined to men; for we read of an old woman who, like the witch of Endor, professed to exercise this ghostly office, and treated an English visitor to an exhibition of her powers.[2]

The spirits of the dead were sometimes useful to the living, for commonly enough they would appear to their kinsfolk in dreams and warn them of approaching foes or other dangers. Again, they might be and were invoked by spells and enchantments to avenge a murder or even to slay an innocent person against whom the enchanter had a grudge.[3] But for the most part the ghosts were greatly dreaded as malicious demons who worked harm to man.[4] Even the nearest and dearest relations were believed to have their natures radically changed by death and to hate those whom they had loved in life.[5] And so powerful were these malignant beings supposed to be that they were confused with the gods, or rather the spirits of the dead became themselves gods to all intents and purposes, and played a

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 83.

[2] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 84 *sqq.*; *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori (London, 1884), pp. 122 *sqq.* As to the belief in the reappearance of the dead among the living compare R. A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand* (London, 1823), p. 186: "The belief in the reappearance of the dead is universal among the New Zealanders: they fancy they hear their deceased relatives speaking to them when the wind is high; whenever they pass the place where a man has been murdered, it is customary for each person to throw a stone upon it; and the same practice is observed by all those who visit a cavern at the North Cape, through which the spirits of departed men are supposed to pass on their way to a future world."

[3] Elsdon Best, "Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. ix. no. 4 (December 1900), p. 182.

[4] Elsdon Best, *op. cit.* p. 184.

[5] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 104.

much more important part in the religious life of the Maoris than the high primaeval deities, the personifications of nature, who figured in Maori mythology and cosmogony.[1] The gods whom the Maoris feared, we are told, were the spirits of the dead, who were believed to be constantly watching over the living with jealous eyes, lest they should neglect any part of the law relating to persons or things subject to the sacred restriction called taboo (*tapu*). These spirits, however, confined their care almost exclusively to persons among the living with whom they were connected by ties of relationship, so that every tribe and every family had its own worshipful ancestral spirit or god, whom members of the tribe or family invoked with appropriate prayers or spells (*karakias*). Ancestral spirits who lived in the flesh before the Maoris emigrated to New Zealand were invoked by all the tribes in New Zealand without distinction, so far as their names and memories survived in tradition. Thus the worship of these remote ancestors constituted what may be called the national religion of the Maoris as distinguished from the tribal and family religions, which consisted in the worship of nearer and better remembered progenitors. The great importance attached by the Maoris to the worship of ancestors may account, we are told, for the care with which they preserved their genealogies; since the names of ancestors often formed the groundwork of their religious formulas (*karakias*), and any error or even hesitation in repeating these prayers or incantations was deemed fatal to their efficacy.[2]

[1] E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (London, 1851), p. 294; *id.*, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 80, 81; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, pp. 10 *sq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 108, "Maori gods are so mixed up with the spirits of ancestors, whose worship entered largely into their religion, that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other."

[2] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 81; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, p. 11. As to the *karakias*, which were prayers or invocations, spells or incantations, addressed to gods or ancestral spirits, see E. Shortland, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, pp. 28 *sqq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 128, *s.v.* "karakia." Apparently the *karakia* partook of the nature of a spell rather than of a prayer, since it was believed to be so potent that the mere utterance of it compelled the gods to do the will of the person who recited the formula. See R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 180 *sq.*: "The Maori, in his heathen state, never undertook any work, whether hunting, fishing, planting, or war, without first uttering a *karakia*;

"Ancestor worship, or rather the deification of ancestors, was essentially a Maori cult. It was a form of necrolatry, or hero worship. A man would placate the spirit of his father, grandfather, or ancestor, and make offerings to the same, that such spirit might protect his life principle, warn him of approaching danger, and give force or effectiveness to his rites and charms of black or white magic."[1]

The ancestral spirits who particularly watched over the fortunes of a tribe were the souls of its dead warriors and great men. In war these powerful, though invisible, beings were thought to attend the army and direct its movements on the march by communicating advice or warning through some one or other of their nearest living kinsmen. In battle they hovered over the combatants and inspired courage into the hearts of their own tribe. Hence when, on the eve of battle, any young man showed signs of the white feather, recourse was immediately had to the family priest, who repeated a charm, invoking the aid of his friendly spirit; for the sensation of fear was ascribed to the baneful influence of a hostile spirit. If the friendly spirit prevailed, and the craven spirit was expelled, the young man would rush into the thickest of the fight and prove himself the bravest of the brave.[2]

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he would not even take a journey without repeating a spell to secure his safety; still he could not be said to pray, for, properly speaking, they had no such thing as prayer. As in war, they armed themselves with the most formidable weapons they could procure, and laid their plans with the greatest skill they possessed, so to secure the fruition of their desires, they used their most powerful means to compel the gods to be obedient to their wishes, whether they sought for victory over their foes, fruitful crops, successful fishings, or huntings, they called in the aid of potent incantations; when they planted their *kumara* [sweet potatoes], they sought to compel the god who presided over them to yield a good increase; when they prepared their nets and their hooks, they must force the ocean god to let his fish enter them; as the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by storm, so the heathen Maori sought, by spells and incantations, to compel the gods to yield to their wishes; they added sacrifices and offerings at the same time, to appease as it were their anger, for being thus constrained to do what they wished them. Their ancestors were addressed as powerful familiar friends; they gave them offerings, and if it can be said that any prayers were offered up, it was to them they were made. The word *karakia*, which we use for prayer, formerly meant a spell, charm, or incantation."

[1] Elsdon Best, "Maori Religion," *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Brisbane, 1909*, p. 459.

[2] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 81 *sq.*

The interest taken by the spirits of the dead in mundane affairs seldom extended beyond the limits of the tribe to which they belonged. Hence a captive in war, who was carried away and enslaved by another tribe, ceased from that moment to be under the protection and care of any ancestral spirit or god. For the ancestral spirits of his own tribe did not trouble themselves to follow him among a hostile tribe and hostile spirits, and the ancestral spirits of the tribe whom he served as a slave would not deign to give him a thought. Hence being forsaken of god and left to their own devices, slaves were relieved from many of the burdensome restrictions which the Maori gods laid upon their worshippers; they were therefore free to perform many menial offices, particularly in regard to carrying and cooking food, which no free Maori could discharge without sinning against the sacred law of taboo and incurring the wrath of the ancestral spirits, who for such a transgression might punish the sinner with sickness or death.[1]

In addition to their deified ancestors, who had lived as men of flesh and blood on earth, the Maoris believed in certain great primaeval deities, who had existed before the human race came into being, and whose doings were the theme of many mythical stories. These mighty beings appear to have been personifications of the various forces or elements of nature, such as the sky and the earth. But though fancy wove round them a glistering web of myth and fable, they were apparently believed to stand aloof in cold abstraction from human affairs and to take no interest in the present race of men. The practical religion of the Maori was concentrated on the souls of his deceased kinsfolk and forefathers: "neither in any existing superstition nor tradition, purely such, is there to be found internal evidence that an idea of God existed more exalted than that of the spirit of a dead ancestor."[2]

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 82 *sq.*; *id.*, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*, pp. 296 *sq.*

[2] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 80. Compare *id.*, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 81; *id.*, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*, p. 294; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, pp. 10 *sq.* In Maori mythology Rangi is the personification of the sky, and Papa of earth. They were the primal parents, and the other great gods were their offspring. See Elsdon Best, "The Maori Genius

The word which the Maoris applied to a god, whether a personification of nature or the spirit of a dead ancestor, was *atua*. The name is not confined to the Maori language, but is the common word for god throughout Polynesia.[1] When the Maoris attempt to define the nature of an *atua*, they have recourse to the same comparisons with a shadow and with breath which appear to underlie their conception of the human soul.[2] But though "god" is the nearest English equivalent of the word *atua*, we must beware of assuming that the Maori idea of godhead coincided with ours. On this subject one of our best authorities tells us that the term "god" is really not applicable to the *Atua Maori*, the so-called gods of the Maoris. For these beings, he says, "were, with few exceptions, malignant demons, to be feared and placated or conciliated, but not worshipped. Their principal task seems to have been the inflicting upon mankind of diverse evils, pains, and penalties. Of the few good offices performed by them, the warning of the people in regard to coming troubles, seems to have been the most important. The vast majority of the so-called gods of the Maori were simply deified ancestors." [3]

In order to illustrate the difference between the Maori conception of deity and our own, I will quote the words of another eminent authority on the native religion of the New

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for Personification," *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, liii. (1921) p. 2. Among the great primordial deities who were worshipped by all tribes of New Zealand may be mentioned Tane, Tu, Tangaroa, and Rongo. Of the four, Tane was the origin and tutelary deity of forests and birds: no tree might be felled and no bird caught till certain rites had been performed to placate him. Tu was the god of war. Tangaroa was the god of the ocean, the origin and tutelary deity of fish. Rongo was the god of peace, and presided over agriculture. See Elsdon Best, "Maori Religion," *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Brisbane, 1909*, p. 458. The same four gods, with names only dialectically different, were, as we shall see later on, the principal deities of the Sandwich Islanders, the most distant geographically from the Maoris of all the Polynesians. The coincidence furnishes an example of the homogeneity of religion which prevailed among the various branches of the Polynesian race.

[1] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 30 *sq.*, *s.v.* "Atua."

[2] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 516 *sq.*

[3] Elsdon Best, "Notes on the Art of War as conducted by the Maori of New Zealand," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xi. no. 2 (June 1902), pp. 63 *sq.*

Zealanders. He says: "Before the mythology of the Maori is further considered, it will be necessary briefly to state what were the ideas of God entertained by the natives. The word *atua*, or spirit, which is used for God, formerly had various significations; a plague or disease was also *he atua*, or God; a thief was an *atua*, thus also a thievish dog was *he kuri atua*, a god-like dog, so also *he tangata atua ki te muru*, a man equal to a god in stealing; a child who pilfered was *he tamaiti atua*, a divine child; there were great spirits and small ones, a man's spirit was an *atua pore pore*, a little spirit, but Maru Rongomai and other gods were *Atua nui*, great gods; there were *atua ika*, reptile or fish gods; a great chief was called *He ika*, a fish, sea monster, or reptile, and was regarded as a malignant god in life, and a still worse one after death; there were likewise *Atua marau*, as the *toroa*, albatross, the *ruru*, owl; and *karu karu*, the film which shades its eye from the light, was also an *atua*; male and female spirits presided over dreams, and were regarded as *atuas*, *Ko nga atua moe moea o te poko*, the gods of dreams; *Tunui a rangi*, a male, *Pare kewa*, a female deity, both were prayed to as gods; the *atua kore* and *atua kiko kiko* were inferior gods. The *Atua ngarara* or reptile gods were very abundant, and were supposed to be the cause of all diseases and death, being always ready to avail themselves of every opportunity of crawling down the throat during sleep, and thus preying upon the lives of unfortunate creatures. *Atuas* or spirits of the deceased were thought to be able to revisit the earth and reveal to their friends the cause of their sickness. Everything that was evil or noxious was supposed especially to belong to the gods; thus a species of euphorbium, whose milk or juice is highly poisonous, is called *wai u atua*, the milk of the gods."[1] "In fact, in the accounts which the natives give of their gods and their exploits, we have but a magnified history of their chiefs, their wars, murders, and lusts, with the addition of some supernatural powers; they were cannibals; influenced by like feelings and passions as men, and were uniformly bad; to them were ascribed all the evils incident to the human race; each disease was supposed to be occasioned by a different god, who resided in the part affected; thus, Tonga,

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 134 *sq.*

the god who caused headache, took up his abode in the forehead; Moko Titi, a lizard god, was the source of all pains in the breast; Tu-tangata-kino was the god of the stomach; Titihai occasioned pains in the ankles and feet; Rongomai and Tuparitapua were the gods of consumption, and the wasting away of the legs and arms; Koro-kio-ewe presided over childbirth, and did his worst to unfortunate females in that state. In fact, the entire human body appears to have been shared out amongst those evil beings, who ruled over each part, to afflict and pain the poor creatures who worshipped them."[1]

Anything, indeed, whether good or evil, which excited the fear or wonder of the Maoris would seem in the old days to have been dubbed by them an *atua* and invested with the attributes of divinity. For example, when a traveller in the early years of the nineteenth century showed his watch to some Maoris, the ticking struck them with such astonishment that they deemed it nothing less than the voice of a god; and the watch itself, being looked upon as a deity (*atua*) in person, was treated by the whole of them with profound reverence.[2] Other travellers have had similar experiences among the Maoris,[3] and compasses and barometers have also been accorded divine honours by these ignorant savages.[4]

§ 5. *Taboo among the Maoris*

But the most momentous practical consequence which flowed from their belief in the spirits of the dead was the enormous influence which that creed wielded in establishing and maintaining the system of taboo, the most remarkable and characteristic institution in the life of the Maoris and of the Polynesians in general. I shall first give some account of the taboo or *tapu*, as the Maoris called it, and afterwards show how this extraordinary system of society and religion was directly based on a belief in the existence of ghosts and their mighty power over human destiny.

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 137.

[2] J. L. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand* (London, 1817), i. 254.

[3] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 516.

[4] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 118.

First, then, as to taboo or *tapu* itself. This curious institution, as I have said, prevailed throughout all the widely scattered islands of Polynesia, but nowhere to a greater extent than in New Zealand. It pervaded the whole life of the natives, affected their plans, influenced their actions, and in the absence of an efficient police provided a certain security both for their persons and their property. Sometimes it was used for political, and sometimes for religious purposes; sometimes it was the means of saving life, and at other times it was the ostensible reason for taking life away.[1] It may be defined as a system of consecration which made any person, place, or thing sacred either permanently or for a limited time.[2] The effect of this consecration was to separate the sacred person or thing from all contact with common (*noa*)[3] persons and things: it established a sort of quarantine for the protection not only of the sacred persons themselves, but of common folk, who were supposed to be injured or killed by mere contact with a tabooed person or object. For the sanctity which the taboo conferred on people and things was conceived of as a sort of dangerous atmosphere, charged with a spiritual electricity, which discharged itself with serious and even fatal effect on all rash intruders. A tabooed person might not be touched by any one, so long as the taboo or state of consecration lasted; he might not even put his own hand to his own head; and he was most stringently forbidden to touch food with his hands. Hence he was either fed like a child by another, who put the food into his mouth; or he had to lap up his victuals like a dog from the ground, with his hands held behind his back; or lastly he might convey the nourishment by means of a fern stalk to his mouth. When he wished to drink, somebody else poured water into his mouth from a calabash without allowing the vessel to touch his lips; for mere contact with the lips of the tabooed man would have rendered the vessel itself sacred or tabooed and therefore unfit for common use. Similarly, when he desired to wash his hands, water had to

[1] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 84 *sq.*

[2] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 84; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 163.

[3] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 268 *sq.*, *s.v.* "Noa."

be poured on them from a distance by his attendant. This state of consecration or defilement, as we might be tempted rather to call it, was incurred by any person who had touched either a young child or a corpse or had assisted at a funeral. The taboo contracted by association with the dead was the strictest and most virulent of all. It extended not only to the persons who had handled the corpse or paid the last offices of respect to the departed; it applied to the place where the body was buried or the bones deposited. So sacred, indeed, was deemed the spot where a chief had died that in the old days everything upon it was destroyed by fire. Hence in order to avoid the destruction of a house, which a death in it would have entailed, it was customary to remove a sick or dying man to a temporary shed just large enough to shelter him from the sun or screen him from the rain; for if the man died in it, the destruction of the wretched hovel was no great loss to the survivors.[1] A widow was tabooed and had to observe the aforesaid restrictions from the death of her husband until his bones had been scraped and deposited in their last resting-place; and the same rule applied to a widower.[2] These taboos were temporary and could be removed by a priest, who performed certain rites and repeated certain spells (*karakias*), and thereby relieved the tabooed person from the state of sanctity or consecration under which he had laboured. The performance of the ceremony put an end to the spiritual quarantine; the man ceased to be sacred, he became common (*noa*) once more, and could mingle freely with his fellows. One of the ceremonies of desecration, as we may call it, was to pass a consecrated piece of wood over the right shoulder of the tabooed person, then round his loins, and back again over the left shoulder, after which the stick was broken in two and buried, burned, or cast into the sea.[3] Again, a temporary taboo was laid

[1] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 85 *sq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 163, 164.

[2] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 40.

[3] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse*, *Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), iii. 685; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 86; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 104 *sq.*; Servant, "Notice sur la Nouvelle-Zélande," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xv. (1843) p. 23; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 166 *sq.*; *Old New Zealand*,

on all persons who were engaged in planting sweet potatoes, or in sorting the seed, or in digging and preparing the ground; they might not leave the fields where they were at work nor undertake any other labour. The fields themselves were sacred during these operations; none but the persons who were tabooed for the purpose might set foot on the ground or pluck up the weeds which grow rankly round the roots of the vegetable.[1] Similarly, in their great fishing-expeditions to catch mackerel, all concerned in making or mending the nets were under a taboo: the ground where the nets were made was sacred, and so was the river on the banks of which the work went on. No man but the tabooed persons might walk over the land or pass up or down the river in a canoe: no fire might be lighted within a prescribed distance: no food might be dressed while the taboo lasted. Not till the net had been finished and wetted with the sacred water, and the owner had caught and eaten a fish, did these burdensome restrictions come to an end by the removal of the taboo.[2] Once more, the men who took part in a warlike expedition were under a severe taboo and had to observe very strictly the customs which that mysterious state of consecration rendered obligatory.[3] Even after their return home they were not allowed to enter their houses or to hold any direct communication with their families who had remained there, till they had been rendered common (*noa*) by a ceremony of desecration. Before that ceremony took place, the warriors were obliged to throw away the remains of the bodies of their foes on which, as usual, they had been feasting; for being sacred food the flesh could only be touched by sacred or tabooed persons. One woman only, the *wahine ariki*, as she was called, that is the elder female of the elder branch of the stock from which the tribe traced their descent, was

by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 104 *sqq.* The taboo could be got rid of more simply by the tabooed man touching his child or grandchild and taking food or drink from the child's hands. But when that was done, the taboo was transferred to the child, who retained it for the rest of the day. See E. Dieffenbach, *op. cit.* ii. 105.

[1] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 85; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 165 *sq.*; *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 103 *sq.*

[2] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 85.

[3] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 96, 114 *sq.*

permitted to touch the sanctified meat; indeed, in order to carry out the ritual of desecration in due form she was expected and required to swallow an ear of the first enemy killed in battle.[1] A warlike expedition might lay even people at home under a taboo; for all who remained behind, including old men, women, and slaves, were often required to observe a rigid fast and to abstain from smoking till the return of the warriors.[2]

But in contrast to the temporary taboos which affected common folk and debarred them for a time from familiar intercourse with their fellows, a perpetual and very stringent taboo was laid on the persons and property of chiefs, especially of those high hereditary chiefs who bore the title of *Ariki* and were thought to be able at any time to hold visible converse with their dead ancestors.[3] Strictly speaking, "the *ariki* of a Maori tribe is the senior male descendant of the elder branch of the tribe, that is, he is a descendant of the elder son of the elder son of each generation from the time of the original ancestor down to the present day. As such, he was of old regarded almost as a god, inasmuch as he represented all that there was of *măna* and sacredness of his tribe. That he should have been regarded in this light is not astonishing, for the Maoris believed he was something more than human, in that he was the shrine of an hereditary *Atua*, the guardian spirit of the tribe, and could therefore at any time communicate with the tribal gods. . . . Such a man was not only *tapu* in person but he made everything he touched so dangerously sacred as to be a source of terror to the tribe. To smoke his pipe, or drink from any vessel he had touched, was death speedy and certain at the hands of the gods, who avenge breaches of the *tapu*."[4] "The gods being no more than

[1] E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*, pp. 68 *sq.*

[2] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 114 *sq.*

[3] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 40, 112 *sq.*, 356; E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 104; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 149, 164, 212 *sq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 23 *sq.*, *s.v.* "Ariki." The word *ariki* signifies properly the first-born or heir, whether male or female, of a family.

[4] Lieut.-Col. W. E. Gudgeon, "Maori Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xiv. no. 3 (September 1905), p. 130. Compare *id.*, "The Tipua-Kura and other Manifestations of the Spirit World," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xv. no. 57 (March 1906), p. 38.

deceased chiefs, the *arikis* were regarded as living ones, and thus were not to be killed by inferior men, but only by those who had more powerful *atuas* in them; the victorious chief who had slain numbers, swallowed their eyes, and drunk their blood, was supposed to have added the spirits of his victims to his own, and thus increased his *mana* or power; to keep up this idea, and hinder the lower orders from trying whether it were possible to kill such corporeal and living gods, was the grand work of the *tapu*."[1] The godhead of a chief was thought to reside in his eyes, especially in his left eye; that was why by swallowing the eye or eyes of a slain chief a living chief was believed to absorb the divine spirit of the dead man and thereby to strengthen his own divinity; the more eyes he swallowed, the greater god he became.[2]

Every such divine chief was under a permanent taboo;

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui*, p. 173. *Mana* means authority, especially divine authority or supernatural power. See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 203, *s.v.* "Mana"; and for a full discussion of the conception see Lieut.-Col. W. E. Gudgeon, "Mana Tangata," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xiv. no. 2 (June 1905), pp. 49-66. "*Mana* plays a leading part in the ability of a leader, or successes in war of celebrated warriors. When a man frequently undertakes daring deeds, which ought under ordinary circumstances to fail, but none the less prove successful, he is said to possess *mana*, and thereafter is regarded as one peculiarly favoured by the gods, and in such cases it is held that he can only be overcome by some act or default; such as a disregard or neglect of some religious or warlike observance, which has been shown by experience to be essential to success in war, but which our warrior, spoiled by a long career of good fortune, had come to regard as necessary to ordinary mortals only and of but little consequence to men of *mana*" (W. E. Gudgeon, *op. cit.* p. 62). "There were cases in which the *mana* of a man depended upon the facility with which he could communicate with the spirits of departed ancestors, that is, upon his capacity to enforce the aid and attendance of these minor deities. To this end every man with any pretension to *mana* had a knowledge of certain forms of invocation by which he could summon the spirits of long departed heroes and ancestors, but it must not be supposed that these invocations would necessarily have power in the mouths of all men, for such was not the case. The efficacy of a *karakia* or invocation depended in part on its method of delivery, and in part on the *mana* of the man who used it" (W. E. Gudgeon, *op. cit.* p. 50). Compare R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 172, 173; *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, p. 100.

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 147, 352. The soul was thought to reside especially in the left eye; accordingly it was the left eye of an enemy which was most commonly swallowed by a victorious chief who desired to increase his spiritual power. See J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 527; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 118, 128 *sq.*

he was as it were surrounded by an atmosphere of sanctity which attached to his person and never left him; it was his birthright, a part of himself of which he could not be divested, and it was well understood and recognised by everybody at all times. And the sanctity was not confined to his person, it was an infection which extended or was communicated to all his movable property, especially to his clothes, weapons, ornaments, and tools, indeed to everything which he touched. Even the petty chiefs and fighting men, everybody indeed who could claim the title of *rangatira* or gentleman, possessed in some degree this mysterious quality.[1] However, in young people of rank the sanctity which appertained to them by virtue of their birth was supposed to be only latent; it did not develop or burst into full bloom till they had reached mature age and set up house on their own account. Hence noble boys and lads were under none of the irksome restrictions to which in their adult years they were afterwards bound to submit; they mixed freely with the profane vulgar and did not even disdain to carry fuel or provisions on their backs, a thing which no man of any standing could possibly do; at all events, if he did so demean himself, the food was thereby rendered taboo and could accordingly be used by nobody but himself. "If he went into the shed used as a kitchen (a thing, however, he would never think of doing except on some great emergency), all the pots, ovens, food, etc., would be at once rendered useless—none of the cooks or inferior people could make use of them, or partake of anything which had been cooked in them. He might certainly light a little fire in his own house, not for cooking, as that never by any chance could be done in his house, but for warmth; but that, or any other fire, if he should have blown upon it with his breath in lighting it, became at once *tapu*, and could be used for no common or culinary purpose. Even to light a pipe at it would subject any inferior person, or in many instances an equal, to a terrible attack of the *tapu morbus*, besides being a slight or affront to the dignity of the person himself. I have seen two or three young men fairly wearing themselves out on a wet day and with bad

[1] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, p. 94.

apparatus trying to make fire to cook with, by rubbing two sticks together, when on a journey, and at the same time there was a roaring fire close at hand at which several *rangatira* and myself were warming ourselves, but it was *tapu*, or sacred fire—one of the *rangatira* had made it from his own tinder-box, and blown upon it in lighting it, and as there was not another tinder-box amongst us, fast we must, though hungry as sharks, till common culinary fire could be obtained."[1]

The head of a chief was always and at all times deemed most sacred, and in consequence he might not even touch it with his own hand; if he chanced to commit the sacrilege, he was obliged at once to apply his fingers to his sacred nose and to snuff up the odour of sanctity which they had abstracted, thus restoring the holy effluvium to the place from which it had been taken.[2] For the same reason the cutting of a chief's hair was a most difficult and delicate operation. While it lasted neither the great man himself nor the barber who operated on him was allowed to do anything or partake of any food except under the restrictions imposed on all sacred or tabooed persons; to use the scissors or the shell, with which the operation was performed, for any other purpose or any other person would have been a terrible profanation of sacred things, and would have rendered the rash sacrilegious wretch, who had dared so to appropriate it, liable to the severest punishment. The severed hair was collected and buried or hung up on a tree,[3] probably to put it out of the way of common folk, who might have been struck dead by contact with the holy locks. But apparently the dangers incident to hair-cutting were by no means confined to chiefs, but extended to any one who was bold enough to submit his head to the barber's shears; for one of the early writers on the Maoris tells us that "he who has had his hair cut is in the immediate charge of the *Atua*; he is removed from the contact and society of his family and his tribe; he dare not touch his food himself; it is put into

[1] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, p. 98.

[2] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 87; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 165.

[3] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 87; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 104.

his mouth by another person; nor can he for some days resume his accustomed occupations, or associate with his fellow-men."[1] The hair of the first-born of a family in particular, on account of his extreme sanctity, might be cut by nobody but a priest; and for many days after the operation had been performed the priestly barber was in a state of strict taboo. He could do nothing for himself, and might not go near anybody. He might not touch food with his hands, and no less than three persons were required to feed him. One of them prepared the food at a safe distance, took it to a certain place, and retired; a second came forward, picked up the victuals, carried them to another spot and left them; finally, a third, venturing into the danger zone, actually brought the food to the priest and put it into his mouth.[2]

The atmosphere of taboo or sanctity which thus surrounded Maori chiefs and gentlemen not only imposed many troublesome and inconvenient restraints on the men themselves, it was also frequently a source of very real danger, loss, and annoyance to other people. For example, it was a rule that a chief should not blow on a fire with his mouth, because his breath being sacred would communicate its sanctity to the fire, and if a slave or a common man afterwards cooked food at the fire or merely took a brand from it, the chief's holiness would cause that man's death.[3] Again, if the blood of a high chief flowed on anything, though it were but a single drop, it rendered the thing sacred to him, so that it could be used by nobody else. Thus it once happened that a party of natives came in a fine new canoe to pay their respects to an eminent chief; the great man stepped into the canoe, and in doing so he chanced to strike a splinter into his foot, which bled. That sufficed to consecrate the canoe to him. The owner at once leaped out, drew the canoe ashore opposite to the chief's house and left it there.[4] Again, a Maori gentle-

[1] Richard A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand* (London, 1823), pp. 283 *sq.* Compare J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 533.

[2] Elsdon Best, "Maori Religion," *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Brisbane, 1909*, p. 463.

[3] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 165.

[4] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 101; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 164 *sq.*

man, visiting a missionary, knocked his head against a beam in the house, and his sacred blood was spilt. The natives present thereupon told the missionary that in former times his house would after such an accident have belonged to his noble visitor.[1] Even the cast garments of a chief had acquired, by contact with his holy body, so virulent a degree of sanctity that they would kill anybody else who might happen in ignorance to find and wear them. On a journey, when a chief found his blanket too heavy to carry, he has been known to throw it very considerately down a precipice where nobody would be likely to light on it, lest some future traveller should be struck dead by appropriating the sacred garment. Once a chief's lost tinder-box actually caused the death of several persons; for having found it and used it to light their pipes, they literally died of fright on learning the sacrilege which they had committed.[2] Such fatal effects consequent on the discovery of a breach of taboo were not uncommon among the Maoris. For instance, a woman once ate some peaches which, though she did not know it, had been taken from a tabooed place. As soon as she heard where the fruit had come from, the basket which she was carrying dropped from her hands, and she exclaimed in agony that the spirit (*atua*) of the chief whose sanctuary had thus been profaned would kill her. That happened in the afternoon, and next day by twelve o'clock she was dead.[3] Again, a slave, a strong man in the prime of life, once found the remains of a chief's dinner beside the road, and being hungry ate it up without asking any questions. No sooner, however, did he hear to whom the food had belonged than he was seized with the most extraordinary convulsions and cramps in the stomach, which never ceased till he died about sundown the same day. The English eyewitness who reports the case adds, that any European freethinker who should have denied that the man was killed by the chief's taboo would have been listened to by the Maoris with feelings of contempt for his ignorance and inability to understand plain and direct evidence.[4]

[1] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 165.

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, pp. 164 *sq.*

[3] W. Brown, *New Zealand and its Aborigines* (London, 1845), p. 76.

[4] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 95-97.

In order that a thing should be consecrated or tabooed to the exclusive use and possession of a chief, it was not necessary that his sacred blood should flow on it, or that he should merely touch it; he had only to call it his head, or his back-bone, or any other part of his body, and at once the thing, by a legal fiction, became his and might be appropriated by nobody else under pain of violating the taboo which the chief had laid upon it. For example, when a chief desired to prevent a piece of ground from being cultivated by any one but himself, he often resorted to the expedient of calling it his back-bone; after that if any man dared to set foot on the land so consecrated, the transgression was equivalent to a declaration of war. In this simple and easy fashion a chief might acquire anything that took his fancy from an axe or a canoe to a landed estate, and the rightful owner of the property dared not complain nor dispute the claim of his superior.[1]

Nevertheless in daily life even ordinary people used the taboo to secure their property or to acquire for themselves what had hitherto been common to all. For example, if a man found a piece of drift timber, he could make it his own by tying something to it or giving it a chop with his axe; he thereby set his taboo on the log, and as a general rule the taboo would be respected. Again, with a simple piece of flax he might bar the door of his house or his store of food; the contents of the house or store were thus rendered inviolable, nobody would meddle with them.[2]

It is easy to see that this form of taboo must have greatly contributed to create and confirm respect for the rights of private property. The most valuable articles might, we are told, under ordinary circumstances be left to its protection in the absence of the owners for any length of time.[3] Indeed so obvious and so useful is this function of taboo that one well-informed writer supposes the original purpose of the institution to have been no other than the preservation of private property;[4] and another observer,

[1] E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, p. 111; *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, pp. 137 *sqq.*; R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 168.

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui*, p. 171.

[3] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, p. 97.

[4] *Old New Zealand*, by a Pakeha Maori, p. 94.

after eulogising its beneficent effects, declares that "it was undoubtedly the ordinance of a wise legislator."[1] But to say this is greatly to overrate the wisdom and foresight of primitive man in general and of the Polynesians in particular; it implies a fundamental misconception of the real nature and history of taboo. That curious institution was not the creation of a prudent and sagacious legislator, who devised this system of checks and restrictions for the purpose of curbing the passions of a savage race and inducing them to submit to the salutary restraints of law and morality. It was in its origin, I believe, simply a crude and barbarous form of superstition, which, like many other superstitions, has accidentally led to good results that were never contemplated by its ignorant and foolish votaries. It is thus that in the long history of mankind things which to a contemporary spectator might seem to be almost unmitigated evils turn out in the end to be fraught with incalculable good to humanity. This experience, often repeated, enables students of the past to look forward, even in the darkest hours, with cheerful confidence to the future.

The particular superstition which lies at the root of taboo and has incidentally exercised a beneficent influence by inspiring a respect for law and morality appears to be a belief in the existence of ghosts and their power to affect the

[1] E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 100, "Ridiculous as this custom of the *tapu* has appeared to some, and as many of its applications really are, it was, notwithstanding, a wholesome restraint, and, in many cases, almost the only one that could have been imposed; the heavy penalties attached to the violation of its laws serving in one tribe, or in several not in actual hostility with each other, as moral and legal commandments. It was undoubtedly the ordinance of a wise legislator." Compare G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, i. 330, "Doubtless this law is the result of some wise regulation for the protection of property and individuals, and it has in many things a beneficial influence amongst a people who have no written or regularly established code of laws of their own." To the same effect another authority on the Maoris observes: "The most politic and useful of all the superstitious institutions of the Maori people is that which involves the rites of *tapu*. It has always seemed to me that this institution, with its far-reaching ramifications, must have been the conception of a very gifted mind, for, as a governing factor, it is very superior to the Hindu institution of caste. It must, moreover, have been initiated during a period of civilisation, to which the Polynesians have long been strangers, but with which at one period of their history they were sufficiently familiar." See Lieut.-Colonel Gudgeon, "The Tipua-Kura and other Manifestations of the Spirit World," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xv. no. 57 (March 1906), p. 49.

fortunes of the living for good or evil. For the ultimate sanction of the taboo, in other words, that which engaged the people to observe its commandments, was a firm persuasion that any breach of these commandments would surely and speedily be punished by an *atua* or ghost, who would afflict the sinner with a painful malady till he died. From youth upwards the Maori was bred in the faith that the souls of his dead ancestors, jealous of any infraction of the traditionary rites, would commission some spirit of their kin to enter into the transgressor's body and prey on a vital part. The visible signs of this hidden and mysterious process they fancied to be the various forms of disease. The mildest ailments were thought to be caused by the spirits of those who had known the sufferer on earth, and who accordingly were imagined to be more merciful and more reluctant to injure an old friend and relation. On the other hand the most malignant forms of disease were attributed to the spirits of dead infants, who having never learned to love their living friends, would rend and devour the bowels of their nearest kin without compunction. With these ideas as to the origin of disease the Maoris naturally did not attempt to heal the sick through the curative properties of herbs and other drugs; their remedies consisted not in medicine but in exorcism: instead of a physician they sent for a priest, who by his spells and incantations undertook to drive the dangerous sprite from the body of the patient and to appease the ancestral spirit, whose wrath was believed to be the cause of all the mischief. If the deity proved recalcitrant and obstinately declined to accept this notice to quit, they did not hesitate to resort to the most threatening and outrageous language, sometimes telling him that they would kill and eat him, and at others that they would burn him to a cinder if he did not take himself off at once and allow the patient to recover.[1]

[1] E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand*, pp. 30 *sq.*, 294 *sq.*; *id.*, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 114 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, 31 *sq.*; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 141 *sq.* Most malignant and dangerous of all appear to have been thought the spirits of abortions or still-born infants. See Elsdon Best, "The Lore of the *Whare-Kohanga*," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xv. no. 57 (March 1906), pp. 12-15; *Reise der Oesterreichischen Fregatte Novara um die Erde, Anthropologischer Theil, Dritte Abtheilung, Ethnographie*, bearbeitet von Dr. Fr. Müller

Curiously enough, the spirit which preyed on the vitals of a sick man was supposed to assume the form of a lizard; hence these animals, especially a beautiful green species which the Maoris called *kakariki*, were regarded with fear and horror by the natives.[1] Once when a Maori of Herculean thews and sinews was inadvertently shown some green lizards preserved in a bottle of spirits, his massive frame shrank back as from a mortal wound, and his face betrayed signs of extreme horror. An aged chief in the room, on learning what was the matter, cried out, "I shall die! I shall die!" and crawled away on hands and knees; while the other man gallantly interposed himself as a bulwark between the fugitive and the green gods (*atuas*) in the bottle, shifting his position adroitly so as to screen the chief till he was out of range of the deities.[2] An old man once assured a missionary very seriously that in attending to a sick person he had seen the god come out of the sufferer's mouth in the form of a lizard, and that from the same moment the patient began to mend and was soon restored to perfect health.[3]

(Vienna, 1868), pp. 59 *sq.* Even more dangerous than the spirits of dead infants were supposed to be the spirits of human germs, which the Maoris imagined to exist in the menstrual fluid. See E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*, pp. 115, 292; *id.*, *Maori Religion and Mythology*, pp. 107 *sq.* As to disease inflicted by ancestral spirits (*atuas*) for breaches of taboo, see further J. L. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand* (London, 1817), i. 272 *sq.*, ii. 176 *sq.*; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 105, "The breaking of the *tapu*, if the crime does not become known, is, they believe, punished by the *Atua*, who inflicts disease upon the criminal; if discovered, it is punished by him whom it regards, and often becomes the cause of war."

[1] Richard A. Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand* (London, 1823), p. 320; J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 517; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, pp. 141 *sq.*; E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, ii. 117; Elsdon Best, "Maori Medical Lore," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. xiii. no. 4 (December 1904), p. 228. As to the superstitious veneration of lizards among the peoples of the Malay-Polynesian stock, see G. A. Wilken, *Verspreide Geschriften* (The Hague, 1912), iv. 125 *sqq.*

[2] G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, ii. 67.

[3] W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand*, p. 142.

§ 6. *Conclusion*

If now we attempt to sum up the effects which the belief in human immortality exercised on the life of the Maoris we may perhaps conclude that these effects were partly good and partly evil. On the one hand by ascribing to the chiefs the special protection of the powerful spirits of the dead, it invested the governing class with a degree of authority to which on merely natural or rational grounds they could have laid no claim; hence it tended to strengthen the respect for government and to ensure the maintenance of law and order. Moreover, by lending a supernatural sanction to the rights of private property among all classes it further contributed to abolish one of the most fruitful sources of discord and crime in the community and thereby to foster economic progress, which cannot exist without some measure of peace and security for life and possessions. These were great gains, and so far as the faith in immortality helped to win them for the Maoris, it certainly ameliorated their condition and furthered the cause of civilisation among them. But on the other hand the belief in the essential malignancy of the spirits of the dead and in their great power to harm the living added a host of purely imaginary terrors to the real evils with which man's existence on earth is naturally and inevitably encompassed: it imposed a regular system of needless and vexatious restrictions on social intercourse and the simplest acts of daily life; and it erected an almost insuperable barrier to the growth of science, and particularly of that beneficent branch of science which has for its object the alleviation of human suffering, since by concentrating the whole attention of the people on a false and absurd theory of supernatural agency it diverted them from that fruitful investigation of natural causes which alone can strengthen and extend man's control over matter. This was a heavy toll to pay for the advantages incidental to a belief in immortality; and if we were asked to strike a balance between the good and the evil which that belief entailed on the Maoris, we might well hesitate to say to which side the scales of judgment should incline.

CHAPTER II

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE TONGANS

§ 1. *The Tonga or Friendly Islands*

THE Tonga or Friendly Islands form an archipelago of about a hundred small islands situated in the South Pacific, between 18° and 22° South latitude and between 173° and 176° East longitude. The archipelago falls into three groups of islands, which lie roughly north and south of each other. The southern is the Tonga group, the central is the Haabai or Haapai group, and the northern is the Vavau group. In the southern group the principal islands are Tongataboo and Eua; in the central group, Namuka and Lifuka (Lefooga); in the northern group, Vavau. The largest island of the archipelago, Tongataboo, is about twenty-two miles long by eight miles wide; next to it in importance are Vavau and Eua, and there are seven or eight other islands not less than five miles in length. The rest are mere islets. Most of the islands are surrounded by dangerous coral reefs, and though the soil is deep and very fertile, there is a great lack of flowing water; running streams are almost unknown. Most of the islands consist of coral and are very low; the highest point of Tongataboo is only about sixty feet above the level of the sea.[1] However, some of the islands are lofty and of

[1] Horatio Hale, *U.S. Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology* (Philadelphia, 1846), pp. 4 *sq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. (London, 1894) pp. 497, 499. As to the scarcity of running water, see Captain James Cook, *Voyages* (London, 1809), iii. 206, v. 389. He was told that there was a running stream on the high island of Kao. As to the soil of Tongataboo, see Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1899), p. 280, "The soil is everywhere prolific, and consists of a fine rich mould, upon an average about fourteen or fifteen inches deep, free from stones, except near the beach, where coral rocks appear above

volcanic formation. When Captain Cook visited the islands in 1773 and 1777 there was apparently only one active volcano in the archipelago; it was situated in the small island of Tufoa, which lies to the west of Namuka. Cook saw the island smoking at the distance of ten leagues, and was told by the natives that it had never ceased smoking in their memory, nor had they any tradition of its inactivity.[1] In the hundred and fifty years which have elapsed since Cook's time volcanic action has greatly increased in the archipelago. A considerable eruption took place at Tufoa in 1885: the small but lofty island of Kao (5000 feet high) has repeatedly been in eruption: the once fertile and populous island of Amargura, or Funua-lai, in about 18° South latitude, was suddenly devastated in 1846 or 1847 by a terrific eruption, which reduced it to a huge mass of lava and burnt sand, without a leaf or blade of grass of any kind. Warned by violent earthquakes, which preceded the explosion, the inhabitants escaped in time to Vavau. The roar of the volcano was heard one hundred and thirty miles off; and an American ship sailed through a shower of ashes, rolling like great volumes of smoke, for forty miles. For months afterwards the glare of the tremendous fires was visible night after night in the island of Vavau, situated forty miles away.[2] Another dreadful eruption occurred on the 24th of June 1853, in Niua Foöu, an island about two hundred miles to the north-north-west of Funua-lai. The entire island seems to be the circular ridge of an ancient and vast volcano, of which the crater is occupied by a lake of clear calm water. On the occasion in question the earth was rent in the centre of a native village; the flames of a new volcano burst forth from the fissure, belching a sea of molten lava, under which ten

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the surface. Beneath this mould is a red loam four or five inches thick; next is a very strong blue clay in small quantities; and in some places has been found a black earth, which emits a very fragrant smell resembling bergamot, but it soon evaporates when exposed to the air."

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 277. For descriptions of the volcano see W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, Second Edition (London, 1818), i. 240 *sq.*; and especially Thomas West, *Ten Years in South-Eastern Polynesia* (London, 1865), pp. 89 *sqq.* Both these writers ascended the volcano.

[2] Thomas West, *op. cit.* pp. 79 *sqq.*; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London, 1853), p. 120; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. p. 497.

miles of country, once covered with the richest verdure, have been encased in solid rock, averaging from eight to fifteen feet in thickness. The lake boiled like a cauldron, and long after the more powerful action of the volcano had ceased, the waters of the lake were often rent by tongues of flame, which shot up from them as well as from the clefts in the surrounding precipices.[1] In the island of Late, lying to the west of Vavau, a new volcano broke out with great violence in 1854; the roar of the volcano was heard at Lifuka, fifty miles away; the immense pillar of smoke was visible by day and the fire by night. The central portion of one side of the mountain (about 2500 feet high) was completely blown out by the explosion.[2]

But not only have new volcanoes appeared or long extinct volcanoes resumed their activity within the last century in the existing islands, new islands have been formed by volcanic action. One such island, emitting volumes of fire, smoke, and steam, issued from the surface of the sea, and was discovered by the missionary ship *John Wesley* in August 1857; its appearance had been heralded some years before by a strange agitation of the sea and by fire and smoke ascending from the water. This new volcanic island lies about midway between the two other volcanic islands of Tufoa and Late.[3] A third new volcanic island seems to have been formed to the south of Tufoa in 1886.[4] Another new island was thrown up from the sea about the beginning of the twentieth century; it was partly washed away again, but has again materially increased in size.[5] It is noteworthy that the volcanoes, new or old, all occur in a line running roughly north and south at a considerable distance to the west of, but parallel to, the main body of the Tongan archipelago. They clearly indicate the existence of submarine volcanic action on a great scale. Even in the coralline islands traces of volcanic agency have come to light in the shape of pumice-stones, which have been dug out of

[1] T. West, *op. cit.* pp. 82 *sqq.*; George Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians* (London, 1910), pp. 4 *sq.*

[2] T. West, *op. cit.* pp. 88 *sq.*

[3] T. West, *op. cit.* pp. 92-93.

[4] I infer this from the entry "Volcanic island, 1886," in Mr. Guillemard's map of the Pacific Islands. He does not mention it in the text (*Australasia*, ii. p. 497).

[5] George Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 6.

the solid coral rock at considerable depths.[1] In the lofty island of Eua an extensive dyke of basalt is found inland underlying the coral formation.[2]

These facts lend some countenance to the view that the whole archipelago forms the summit or visible ridge of a long chain of submarine volcanoes, and that the islands, even those of coralline formation, have been raised to their present level by volcanic action.[3] That very acute observer, Captain Cook, or one of the naturalists of the expedition, noticed that in the highest parts of Tongataboo, which he estimated roughly at a hundred feet above sea-level, he often met with "the same coral rock, which is found at the shore, projecting above the surface, and perforated and cut into all those inequalities which are usually seen in rocks that lie within the wash of the tide."[4] Again, on ascending the comparatively lofty island of Eua, Captain Cook observes: "We were now about two or three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and yet, even here, the coral was perforated into all the holes and inequalities which usually diversify the surface of this substance within the reach of the tide. Indeed, we found the same coral till we began to approach the summits of the highest hills; and, it was remarkable, that these were chiefly composed of a yellowish, soft, sandy stone."[5] In the island of Vavau it was remarked by Captain Waldegrave that the coral rock rises many feet above the present level of the sea, and he adds: "The action of fire is visible on it, and we saw several instances of its crystallisation."[6]

The view that even the coralline islands of the Tongan archipelago have been elevated by volcanic agency is not necessarily inconsistent with Darwin's theory that coral reefs are formed during periods of subsidence, not of elevation;[7] for it is quite possible that, after being raised ages ago by volcanic forces, these islands may be now slowly subsiding,

[1] T. West, *op. cit.* p. 94.
[2] George Brown, *op. cit.* p. 4.
[3] T. West, *op. cit.* 95.
[4] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 344.
[5] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 381.
[6] Captain the Hon. W. Waldegrave, R.N., "Extracts from a Private Journal," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, iii. (1833) p. 193.
[7] Charles Darwin, *Journal of Researches, etc., during the Voyage of the "Beagle"* (London, 1912), pp. 471 *sqq.*; Sir Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, Twelfth Edition (London, 1875), ii. 602 *sqq.*; T. H. Huxley, *Physiography* (London, 1881), pp. 256 *sqq.*

and that it has been during the period of subsidence that they have become incrusted by coral reefs. Yet the occurrence of coral rocks, bearing all the marks of marine action, at considerable heights above the sea, appears indubitably to prove that such a general subsidence has been in some places varied by at least a temporary elevation.

In thus postulating elevation by volcanic action, as well as subsidence, to explain the formation of the Tongan islands I am glad to have the support of a good observer, the late Rev. Dr. George Brown, who spent the best years of his life in the Pacific, where his experience both of the larger and the smaller islands was varied and extensive. He writes: "I have seen islands composed of true coralline limestone, the cliffs of which rise so perpendicularly from the blue ocean that the natives have to ascend and descend by ladders in going from the ocean to the top, or vice versa. A large steamer can go so close to some of these cliffs that she could be moored alongside of them in calm weather. It is not at all improbable, I think, that in these islands we have the two factors in the formation of islands, viz. subsidence, during which these immense cliffs were formed, and subsequent upheaval. This is the only way, I think, in which we can account for these perpendicular cliffs in the midst of deep blue ocean." [1]

I have dwelt at what may seem undue length on the volcanic phenomena of the Tonga islands because the occurrence of such phenomena in savage lands has generally influenced the beliefs and customs of the natives, quite apart from the possibility, which should always be borne in mind, that man first obtained fire from an active volcano. But even if, as has been suggested, the Tonga islands formed the starting-point from which the Polynesian race spread over the islands of the Pacific,[2] it seems very unlikely that the Polynesians first learned the use of fire when they reached the Tongan archipelago. More probably they were acquainted,

[1] George Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians* (London, 1910), pp. 13 *sq.*

[2] John Crawfurd, *Grammar and Dictionary of the Malay Language* (London, 1852), *Preliminary Dissertation*, p. 253, quoted by Thomas West, *Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia*, pp. 248 *sqq.* But the more usual view is that the starting-point of the dispersal of the Polynesian race in the Pacific was Samoa.

not only with the use of fire, but with the mode of making it long before they migrated from their original home in Southern Asia. A people perfectly ignorant of that prime necessity could hardly have made their way across such wide stretches of sea and land. But it is quite possible that the myth which the Tongans, in common with many other Polynesians, tell of the manner in which their ancestors procured their first fire, was suggested to them by the spectacle of a volcano in eruption. They say that the hero Maui Kijikiji, the Polynesian Prometheus, first procured fire for men by descending into the bowels of the earth and stealing it from his father, Maui Atalanga, who had kept it there jealously concealed.[1]

§ 2. *The Tonga Islanders, their Character, Mode of Life, and Government*

Physically the Tonga islanders are fine specimens of the Polynesian race and generally impress travellers very favourably. Captain Cook, the first to observe them closely, describes them as very strong and well made, some of them really handsome, and many of them with truly European features and genuine Roman noses.[2] At a later date Commodore Wilkes, the commander of the United States Exploring Expedition, speaks of them as "some of the finest specimens of the human race that can well be imagined, surpassing in symmetry and grace those of all the other groups we had visited"; and farther on he says: "A larger proportion of fine-looking people is seldom to be seen, in any portion of the globe; they are a shade lighter than any of

[1] Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands* (London, 1855), pp. 134-137; Le P. Reiter, "Traditions Tonguiennes," *Anthropos*, xii.-xiii. (1917–1918), pp. 1026-1040; E. E. Collcott, "Legends from Tonga," *Folk-lore*, xxxii. (1921) pp. 45-48. Miss Farmer probably obtained the story from the Rev. John Thomas, who was a missionary in the islands for twenty-five years (from 1826 to 1850). She acknowledges her obligations to him for information on the religion of the natives (p. 125). For the period of Mr. Thomas's residence in Tonga, see Miss Farmer's book, p. 161. The story is told in closely similar forms in many other islands of the Pacific. For some of the evidence see my edition of Apollodorus, *The Library*, vol. ii. p. 331 *sqq*.

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 401 *sq*.

the other islanders; their countenances are generally of the European cast; they are tall and well made, and their muscles are well developed."[1] Still later, in his account of the voyage of the *Challenger*, Lord George Campbell expressed himself even more warmly: "There are no people in the world," he says, "who strike one at first so much as these Friendly Islanders. Their clear, light, copper-brown coloured skins, yellow and curly hair, good-humoured, handsome faces, their *tout ensemble*, formed a novel and splendid picture of the genus *homo*; and, as far as physique and appearance go, they gave one certainly an impression of being a superior race to ours."[2] A Catholic missionary observes that "the natives of Tonga hardly differ from Europeans in stature, features, and colour; they are a little sallower, which may be set down to the high temperature of the climate. It is difficult to have a very fresh complexion with thirty degrees of heat, Réaumur, as we have it during four or five months of the year."[3] In appearance the Tonga islanders closely resemble the Samoans, their neighbours on the north; some find them a little lighter, but others somewhat darker in colour than the Samoans.[4] According to the French explorer, Dumont d'Urville, who passed about a month in Tongataboo in 1827, the Polynesian race in Tonga exhibits less admixture with the swarthy Melanesian race than in Tahiti and New Zealand, there being far fewer individuals of stunted stature, flat noses, and frizzly hair among the Tongans than among the other Polynesians.[5] Even among the Tongans the physical superiority of the chiefs to the common people is said to be conspicuous; they are taller, comelier, and lighter in colour than the lower orders. Some would explain the difference by a difference in upbringing, noblemen being more carefully nursed, better

[1] Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, New Edition (New York, 1851), iii. 10, 25.

[2] Quoted by F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. p. 488.

[3] Jérôme Grange, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) p. 8.

[4] Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, pp. 10 *sq.*; Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, iii. 25; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, pp. 116, 155. The naturalist J. R. Forster thought the Tongans darker than the Tahitians. See his *Observations made during a Voyage round the World* (London, 1778), p. 234.

[5] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de la corvette Astrolabe, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1832) p. 229.

fed, and less exposed to the sun than commoners;[1] but it is possible that they come of a different and better stock.

Intellectually the Tongans are reported to "surpass all the other South Sea islanders in their mental development, showing great skill in the structure of their dwellings and the manufacture of their implements, weapons, and dress."[2] They are bold navigators,[3] and Captain Cook observes that "nothing can be a more demonstrative evidence of their ingenuity than the construction and make of their canoes, which, in point of neatness and workmanship, exceed everything of this kind we saw in this sea."[4] However, the Tongans appear to have acquired much of their skill in the art of building and rigging canoes through intercourse with the Fijians, their neighbours to the west, who, though their inferiors in seamanship and the spirit of marine adventure, originally surpassed them in naval architecture.[5] Indeed we are told that all the large Tongan canoes are built in Fiji, because the Tongan islands do not furnish any timber fit for the purpose. Hence a number of Tongans are constantly employed in the windward or eastern islands of the Fiji group building these large canoes, a hundred feet or more in length, a process which, it is said, lasts six or seven years.[6] The debt which in this respect the Tongans owe to the Fijians was necessarily unknown to Captain Cook, since he never reached the Fijian islands and knew of them only by report, though he met and questioned a few Fijians in Tongataboo.[7]

When Captain Cook visited the Tonga islands he found the land almost everywhere in a high state of cultivation. He says that "cultivated roots and fruits being their principal support, this requires their constant attention to agriculture, which they pursue very diligently, and seem to have brought almost to as great perfection as circumstances will permit."[8] The plants which they chiefly

[1] J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* pp. 155 *sq.*; Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 140.

[2] F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. pp. 498 *sq.*

[3] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 264.

[4] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 197.

[5] W. Mariner, *The Tonga Islands*, ii. 263 *sqq.*

[6] J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* p. 132.

[7] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 396 *sq.*

[8] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 411 *sq.*

cultivated and which furnished them with their staple foods were yams and plantains. These were disposed in plantations enclosed by neat fences of reeds about six feet high and intersected by good smooth roads or lanes, which were shaded from the scorching sun by fruit-trees.[1] Walking on one of these roads Cook tells us, "I thought I was transported into the most fertile plains in Europe. There was not an inch of waste ground; the roads occupied no more space than was absolutely necessary; the fences did not take up above four inches each; and even this was not wholly lost, for in many places were planted some useful trees or plants. It was everywhere the same; change of place altered not the scene. Nature, assisted by a little art, nowhere appears in more splendour than at this isle."[2] Interspersed among these plantations irregularly were bread-fruit trees and coco-nut palms, of which the palms in particular, raising their tufted heads in air above the sea of perpetual verdure, formed a pleasing ornament of the landscape.[3] There were no towns or villages; most of the houses were built in the plantations, generally surrounded by trees or ornamental shrubs, whose fragrancy perfumed the air.[4]

When Captain Cook surveyed this rich and beautiful country, the islands were and had long been at peace, so that the natives were able to devote themselves without distraction to the labour of tilling the soil and providing in other ways for the necessities of life. Unhappily shortly after his visit to the islands wars broke out among the inhabitants and continued to rage more or less intermittently for many years. Even the introduction of Christianity in the early part of the nineteenth century, far from assuaging the strife, only added bitterness to it by furnishing a fresh pretext for hostilities, in which apparently the Christians were sometimes the aggressors with the connivance or even the encouragement of the missionaries.[5] In consequence

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 184, 195, v. 274, 316, 357, 416.

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 184.

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 274, 357.

[4] *Id.* iii. 196.

[5] This is affirmed by the Catholic missionary, Jérôme Grange (*Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) pp. 15 *sqq.*), and though he writes with a manifest prejudice against his

cultivation was neglected and large portions of land were allowed to lie waste.[1]

Like all the Polynesians the natives of Tonga were ignorant of the metals, and their only tools were made of stone, bone, shells, shark's teeth, and rough fish-skins. They fashioned axes, or rather adzes, out of a smooth black stone, which they procured from the volcanic island of Tufoa; they used shells as knives; they constructed augers out of shark's teeth, fixed on handles; and they made rasps of the rough skin of a fish, fastened on flat pieces of wood. With such imperfect tools they built their canoes and houses, reared the massive tombs of their kings; and did all their other work.[2] The wonder is that with implements so imperfect they could accomplish so much and raise themselves to a comparatively high level among savages.

A feature of the Tongan character in which the islanders evinced their superiority to most of the Polynesians was their regard for women. In most savage tribes which practise agriculture the labour of tilling the fields falls in great measure on the female sex, but it was not so in Tonga. There the women never tilled the ground nor did any hard work, though they occupied themselves with the manufacture of bark-cloth, mats, and other articles of domestic use. Natives of Fiji, Samoa, and Hawaii, who resided in Tonga, used to remark on the easy lives led by the Tongan women,

rivals the Protestant missionaries, his evidence is confirmed by Commodore Wilkes, the commander of the United States Exploring Expedition, who on his visit to Tongataboo found the Christians and heathens about to go to war with each other. He attempted to make peace between them, but in vain. The heathen were ready to accept his overtures, but "it was evident that King George and his advisers, and, indeed, the whole Christian party, seemed to be desirous of continuing the war, either to force the heathen to become Christians, or to carry it on to extermination, which the number of their warriors made them believe they had the power to effect. I felt, in addition, that the missionaries were thwarting my exertions by permitting warlike preparations during the pending of the negotiations." See Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, iii. 7 *sqq.* (my quotation is from p. 16). The story is told from the point of view of the Protestant (Wesleyan) missionaries by Miss S. S. Farmer, *Tonga and The Friendly Islands*, pp. 293 *sqq.*

[1] John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprise in the South Seas* (London, 1838), p. 264; Charles Wilkes, *op. cit.* iii. 32 *sq.*

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 199, v. 414 *sq.* Captain Cook says that the only piece of iron he found among the Tongans was a small broad awl, which had been made of a nail. But this nail they must have procured either from a former navigator, perhaps Tasman, or from a wreck.

and remonstrated with the men on the subject, saying that as men underwent hardships and dangers in war and other masculine pursuits, so women ought to be made to labour in the fields and to toil for their living. But the Tongan men said that "it is not *gnale fafine* (consistent with the feminine character) to let them do hard work; women ought only to do what is feminine: who loves a masculine woman? besides, men are stronger, and therefore it is but proper that they should do the hard labour."[1]

Further, it is to the credit of the Tongans that, unlike many other Polynesians, they were not generally cannibals, and indeed for the most part held in abhorrence the practice of eating human bodies. Still young warriors occasionally devoured the corpses of their enemies in imitation of the Fijians, imagining that in so doing they manifested a fierce, warlike, and manly spirit. On one occasion, returning from such a repast, they were shunned by every one, especially by the women, who upbraided them, saying, "Away! you are a man-eater."[2]

The government of the Tongan islanders was eminently monarchical and aristocratic. A strict subordination of ranks was established which has been aptly compared to the feudal system. At the head of the social edifice were two chiefs who bore some resemblance to the Emperor and the Pope of mediaeval Europe, the one being the civil and military head of the State, while the other embodied the supreme spiritual power. Nominally the spiritual chief, called the Tooitonga, ranked above the civil chief or king, who paid him formal homage; but, as usually happens in such cases, the real government was in the hands of the secular rather than of the religious monarch. The Tooitonga was acknowledged to be descended from one of the chief gods; he is spoken of by Mariner, our principal authority, as a divine chief of the highest rank, and he is said to have enjoyed divine honours. The first-fruits of the year were offered to him, and it was supposed that if this ceremony were neglected, the vengeance of the gods would fall in a

[1] W. Mariner, *The Tonga Islands*, ii. 287. Compare *id.* ii. 124, note*; Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 410 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 194; compare *id.* i. 317-320.

signal manner upon the people. Yet he had no power or authority in matters pertaining to the civil king.[1] The existence of such a double kingship, with a corresponding distribution of temporal and spiritual functions, is not uncommon in more advanced societies; its occurrence among a people so comparatively low in the scale of culture as the Tongans is remarkable.

Below the two great chiefs or kings were many subordinate chiefs, and below them again the social ranks descended in a succession of sharply marked gradations to the peasants, who tilled the ground, and whose lives and property were entirely at the mercy of the chiefs.[2] Yet the social system as a whole seems to have worked well and smoothly. "It does not, indeed, appear," says Captain Cook, "that any of the most civilised nations have ever exceeded this people, in the great order observed on all occasions; in ready compliance with the commands of their chiefs; and in the harmony that subsists throughout all ranks, and unites them, as if they were all one man, informed with, and directed by, the same principle."[3] According to the American ethnographer, Horatio Hale, the mass of the people in the Tonga islands had no political rights, and their condition in that respect was much inferior to that of commoners in the Samoan islands, since in Tonga the government was much stronger and better organized, as he puts it, for the purpose of oppression. On the other hand, he admitted that government in Tonga was milder than in Tahiti, and infinitely preferable to the debasing despotism which prevailed in Hawaii or the Sandwich Islands.[4]

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 424 *sqq.*; W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 74 *sqq.*, 132 *sqq.*; J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de l'Astrolabe, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1832) pp. 90 *sq.*, "*Si tout était suivant l'ordre légal à Tonga-Tabou, on verrait d'abord à la tête de la société le toui-tonga qui est le véritable souverain nominal des îles Tonga, et qui jouit même des honneurs divins.*"

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 424 *sq.*, 429 *sq.*; W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 83 *sqq.*

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 426.

[4] Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, p. 32.

§ 3. *The Tongan Religion: its General Principles*

For our knowledge of the religion and the social condition of the Tongans before they came under European influence, we are indebted chiefly to an English sailor, William Mariner, who lived as a captive among them for about four years, from 1806 to 1810.[1] His account of the natives, carefully elicited from him and published by a medical doctor, Mr. John Martin, M.D., is one of the most valuable descriptions of a savage people which we possess. Mariner was a good observer and endowed with an excellent memory, which enabled him to retain and record his experiences after his return to England. He spoke the Tongan language, and he was a special favourite of the two Tongan kings, named Finow, who reigned successively in Tonga during his residence in the islands. The kings befriended and protected him, so that he had the best opportunities for becoming acquainted with the customs and beliefs of the people. His observations have been confirmed from independent sources, and we have every reason to regard them as trustworthy. So far as we can judge, they are a simple record of facts, unbiassed by theory or prejudice. In the following notice of the Tongan religion and doctrine of the human soul I shall draw chiefly on the evidence of Mariner.

According to him, the religion of the Tonga islanders rests, or rather used to rest, on the following notions.[2]

They believed that there are *hotooas*,[3] gods, or superior beings, who have the power of dispensing good and evil to mankind, according to their merit, but of whose origin the Tongans formed no idea, rather supposing them to be eternal.

They believed that there are other *hotooas* or gods, who

[1] Mariner was captured by the Tongans on December 1, 1806, and he escaped from the islands in 1810, apparently in November, but the exact date of his escape is not given. See W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 43, ii. 15 *sqq.*, 68, 69.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 97 *sqq.*

[3] The word is commonly spelled *atua* in the Polynesian languages. See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z. 1891), pp. 30 *sq.*, who gives *otua* as the Tongan form.

are the souls of all deceased nobles and *matabooles*, that is, the companions, ministers, and counsellors of the chiefs, who form a sort of inferior nobility.[1] The souls of all these dead men were held to possess a power of dispensing good and evil to mankind like the power of the superior gods, but in a lesser degree.

They believed that there are besides several *hotooa pow*, or mischievous gods, who never dispense good, but only petty evils and troubles, not as a punishment, but indiscriminately to anybody, from a purely mischievous disposition.

They believed that all these superior beings, although they may perhaps have had a beginning, will have no end.

They believed that the world also is of uncertain origin, having coexisted with the gods. The sky, which they regard as solid, the heavenly bodies, and the ocean were in being before the habitable earth. The Tonga islands were drawn up out of the depth of the sea by the god Tangaloa one day when he was fishing with a line and a hook.

They believed that mankind, according to a partial tradition, came originally from Bolotoo, the chief residence of the gods, a fabulous island situated to the north-west of the Tongan archipelago. The first men and women consisted of two brothers, with their wives and attendants. They were commanded by the god Tangaloa to take up their abode in the Tonga islands, but of their origin or creation the Tongans professed to know nothing.[2]

They believed that all human evil was inflicted by the gods upon mankind on account of some neglect of religious duty, whether the neglect is the fault of the sufferers or of the chief whom they serve. In like manner the Tongans apparently referred all human good to the gods, regarding it as a reward bestowed by the divine beings on men who punctually discharged the offices of religion.[3]

[1] As to the *matabooles* see W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 84 *sqq.*

[2] According to a later account, "on Ata were born the first men, three in number, formed from a worm bred by a rotten plant, whose seed was brought by Tangaloa from heaven. These three were afterwards provided by the Maui with wives from the Underworld." See E. E. V. Collocot, "Notes on Tongan Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) p. 154.

[3] So apparently we must interpret Mariner's brief statement "and the contrary of good" (*Tonga Islands*, ii. 98).

They believed that nobles had souls, which existed after death in Bolotoo, not according to their moral merit, but according to their rank in this world; these had power like that of the original gods, but less in degree. The *matabooles*, or ministers of the nobles, also went after death to Bolotoo, where they existed as *matabooles*, or ministers of the gods, but they had not, like the gods and the souls of dead noblemen, the power of inspiring the priests with superhuman knowledge. Some thought that the *mooas*, who ranked next below the *matabooles* in the social hierarchy, also went after death to Bolotoo; but this was a matter of great doubt. As for the *tooas* or commoners, who formed the lowest rung in the social ladder, they had either no souls at all or only such as dissolved with the body after death, which consequently ended their sentient existence.

They believed that the human soul during life is not an essence distinct from the body, but only the more ethereal part of the corporeal frame, and that the moment after death it exists in Bolotoo with the form and likeness of the body which it had on earth.

They believed that the primitive gods and deceased nobles sometimes appear visibly to mankind to warn or to afford comfort and advice; and that the primitive gods also sometimes come into the living bodies of lizards, porpoises, and a species of water snake, hence these animals are much respected. When the gods thus entered into the bodies of porpoises, it was for the sake of safeguarding canoes or for other beneficent purposes.

They believed that the two personages in the Tonga islands known by the titles of Tooitonga and Veachi were descendants in a right line from two chief gods, and that all respect and veneration are therefore due to them.

They believed that some persons are favoured with the inspiration of the gods, and that while the inspiration lasts the god actually exists in the body of the inspired person or priest, who is then capable of prophesying.

They believe that human merit or virtue consists chiefly in paying respect to the gods, nobles, and aged persons; in defending one's hereditary rights; in honour, justice, patriotism, friendship, meekness, modesty, fidelity of married

women, parental and filial love, observance of all religious ceremonies, patience in suffering, forbearance of temper, and so on.

They believed that all rewards for virtue or punishments for vice happen to men in this world only, and come immediately from the gods.

They believed that several acts which civilised nations regard as crimes are, under certain circumstances, matters of indifference. Such acts included the taking of revenge on an enemy and the killing of a servant who had given provocation, or indeed the killing of anybody else, always provided that the victim were not a very superior chief or noble. Further, among indifferent acts was reckoned rape, unless it were committed on a married woman or on one whom the offender was bound to respect on the score of her superior rank. Finally, the list of venial offences included theft, unless the stolen object were consecrated property; for in that case the action became sacrilege and was, as we shall see presently, a very serious crime.

They believed that omens are the direct intimations of the future vouchsafed by the gods to men. "Charms or superstitious ceremonies to bring evil upon any one are considered for the most part infallible, as being generally effective means to dispose the gods to accord with the curse or evil wish of the malevolent invoker; to perform these charms is considered cowardly and unmanly, but does not constitute a crime."[1] One such charm consisted in hiding on a grave (*fytoca*) some portion of the wearing apparel of an inferior relation of the deceased. The person whose garment was so hidden was believed to sicken and die. An equally effectual way of working the charm and ensuring the death of the victim was to bury the garment in the house consecrated to the tutelary god of the family. But when a grave was made use of for the malignant purpose, it was thought essential that the deceased should be of a rank superior to that of the person against whom the charm was directed; otherwise it was supposed that the charm would have no effect.[2] In either case the fatal result was

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 101.
[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 424, note †.

clearly held to be brought about by the power of the ghost or of the god, who used the garment as an instrument for putting the charm in operation. These charms or superstitious ceremonies are what we should now call magical rites, and they were apparently supposed to effect their purpose indirectly by constraining the gods to carry out the malevolent intention of the magician. If I am right in so interpreting them, we seem driven to conclude that in Tonga magic was supposed to be ineffectual without the co-operation of the gods, although its power to compel them was deemed for the most part irresistible. Even so its assumed dependence on the consent, albeit the reluctant consent, of the deities implies a certain decadence of magic and a growing predominance of religion. Moreover, the moral reprehension of such practices for the injury of enemies is another sign that among the Tongans magic was being relegated to that position of a black art which it generally occupies among more civilised peoples. Be that as it may, certain it is that we hear extremely little about the practice of magic among the Tongans.

§ 4. *The Primary or Non-human Gods*

Such are, or rather used to be, the principal articles of the old Tongan creed. We may now examine some of them a little more at large. But first we may observe that on this showing the Tongans were an eminently religious people. They traced all the good and ill in human affairs to the direct intervention of the gods, who rewarded or punished mankind for their deeds in this life, bestowing the reward or inflicting the punishment in the present world and not deferring either to a distant and more or less uncertain future in a world beyond the grave. Thus with the Tongans the fear of the gods was a powerful incentive to lead a virtuous life; morality was placed under the immediate guardianship of the deities. It is true that according to their notions morality consisted largely in the performance of religious ceremonies, but it was by no means limited to a simple observance of the prescribed rites; for we have seen that their conception of a virtuous life included

compliance with the dictates of justice, modesty, and friendship, the fidelity of wives to their husbands, the mutual affection of parents and children, patience in suffering, and other modes of conduct which we too should not hesitate to rank among the virtues.

When we consider the nature of the Tongan gods, we perceive that they are sharply discriminated into two classes, namely, the primitive and superior gods on the one side and the secondary and inferior gods on the other side. The primitive and superior gods are those who have always been gods and whose origin and beginning are unknown; the secondary and inferior gods are the souls of dead men, who consequently have not always been gods, because they were human beings before death elevated them to the rank of deities. The distinction between these two classes of gods is highly important, not merely for Tongan religion in particular, but for the history of religion in general. For whatever we may think of Euhemerism as a universal explanation of the gods, there can be no doubt that in many lands the ranks of the celestial hierarchy have been largely recruited by the ghosts of men of flesh and blood. But there appears to be a general tendency to allow the origin of the human gods to fall into the background and to confuse them with the true original deities, who from the beginning have always been deities and nothing else. The tendency may sometimes be accentuated by a deliberate desire to cast a veil over the humble birth and modest beginning of these now worshipful beings; but probably the obliteration of the distinction between the two classes of divinities is usually a simple result of oblivion and the lapse of time. Once a man is dead, his figure, which bulked so large and so clear to his contemporaries, begins to fade and melt away into something vague and indistinct, until, if he was a person of no importance, he is totally forgotten; or, if he was one whose actions or thoughts deeply influenced his fellows for good or evil, his memory lingers in after generations, growing ever dimmer and it may be looming ever larger through the long vista of the ages, as the evening mist appears to magnify the orb of the descending sun. Thus naturally and insensibly, as time goes on,

our mortal nature fades or brightens into the immortal and divine.

As our subject is the belief in immortality and the worship of the dead, we are not directly concerned with the original Tongan deities who were believed never to have been men. But since their functions and worship appear to have been in certain respects closely analogous to those of the inferior deities, the souls of the dead, some notice of them may not be out of place, if it helps to a fuller understanding of what we may call the human gods. Besides, we must always bear in mind that some at least of the so-called original gods may have been men, whose history and humanity had been forgotten. We can hardly doubt that the celestial hierarchy has often been recruited by the souls of the dead.

The original and superior gods, Mariner tells us, were thought to be rather numerous, perhaps about three hundred all told; but the names of very few of them were known, and even those few were familiar only to some of the chiefs and their ministers, the *matabooles*; "for it may easily be supposed," says Mariner, "that, where no written records are kept, only those (gods) whose attributes particularly concern the affairs of this world should be much talked of; as to the rest, they are, for the most part, merely tutelar gods to particular private families, and having nothing in their history at all interesting, are scarcely known to anybody else."[1]

Among these original and superior deities was Tali-y-Toobo, the patron god of the civil king and his family. He was the god of war and was consequently always invoked in time of war by the king's family; in time of peace prayers were sometimes offered to him for the general good of the nation as well as for the particular interest and welfare of the royal house. He had no priest, unless it was the king himself, who was occasionally inspired by him; but sometimes a whole reign would pass without the king being once favoured with the divine afflatus.[2]

Another god was Tooi-fooa Bolotoo, whose name means

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 104.
[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 105.

"Chief of all Bolotoo." From this it might be supposed that he was the greatest god in Bolotoo, the home of the gods and of the deified spirits of men; but in fact he was regarded as inferior to the war god, and the natives could give no explanation of his high-sounding title. He was the god of rank in society, and as such he was often invoked by the heads of great families on occasion of sickness or other trouble. He had several priests, whom he occasionally inspired.[1]

Another great god was Toobo Toty, whose name signifies "Toobo the mariner." He was the god of voyages, and in that capacity was invoked by chiefs or anybody else at sea; for his principal function was to preserve canoes from accidents. Without being himself the god of wind, he had great influence with that deity, and was thus enabled no doubt to save many who were in peril on the great deep.[2]

Another god was Alo Alo, whose name means "to fan." He was the god of wind and weather, rain, harvest, and vegetation in general. When the weather was seasonable, he was usually invoked about once a month to induce him to keep on his good behaviour; but when the weather was unseasonable, or the islands were swept by destructive storms of wind and rain, the prayers to him were repeated daily. But he was not supposed to wield the thunder and lightning, "of which, indeed," says Mariner, "there is no god acknowledged among them, as this phenomenon is never recollected to have done any mischief of consequence."[3] From this it would appear that where no harm was done, the Tongans found it needless to suppose the existence of a deity; they discovered the hand of a god only in the working of evil; fear was the mainspring of their religion. In boisterous weather at sea Alo Alo was not invoked; he had then to make room for the superior god, Toobo Toty, the protector of canoes, who with other sea gods always received the homage of storm-tossed mariners. However, Alo Alo, the weather god, came to his own when the yams were approaching maturity in the early part of November.

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 105 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 106 *sq*

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 108.

For then offerings of yams, coco-nuts, and other vegetable products were offered to him in particular, as well as to all the other gods in general, for the purpose of ensuring a continuation of favourable weather and consequent fertility. The offering was accompanied by prayers to Alo Alo and the other gods, beseeching them to extend their bounty and make the land fruitful. Wrestling and boxing matches formed part of the ceremony, which was repeated eight times at intervals of ten days. The time for the rite was fixed by the priest of Alo Alo, and a curious feature of the ceremony was the presence of a girl of noble family, some seven or eight years old, who represented the wife of Alo Alo and resided in his consecrated house during the eighty days that the festal season lasted.[1]

Another god named Móooi was believed to support the earth on his prostrate body. In person he was bigger than any other of the gods; but he never inspired anybody, and had no house dedicated to his service. Indeed, it was supposed that this Atlas of the Pacific never budged from his painful and burdensome post beneath the earth. Only when he felt more than usually uneasy, he tried to turn himself about under his heavy load; and the movement was felt as an earthquake by the Tongans, who endeavoured to make him lie still by shouting and beating the ground with sticks.[2] Similar attempts to stop an earthquake are common in many parts of the world.[3]

Tangaloa was the god of artificers and the arts. He had several priests, who in Mariner's time were all carpenters. It was he who was said to have brought up the Tonga islands from the bottom of the sea at the end of his fishing line;[4] though in some accounts of Tongan tradition this feat is attributed to Maui.[5] The very hook on which he hauled

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 205-208; compare *id.* 7, note *, 108.

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 112 *sq.* Compare Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1799), pp. 277 *sq.* Móooi is the Polynesian god or hero whose name is usually spelled Maui. See Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, p. 23; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 233 *sqq. s.v.* "Maui."

[3] *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, i. 197 *sqq.*

[4] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 109, 114 *sq.*; Horatio Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, pp. 24 *sq.*

[5] Jérôme Grange, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) p. 11; Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*,

up the islands was said to be preserved in Tonga down to about thirty years before Mariner's time. It was in the possession of the divine chief Tooitonga; but unfortunately, his house catching fire, the basket in which the precious hook was kept perished with its contents in the flames. When Mariner asked Tooitonga what sort of hook it was, the chief told him that it was made of tortoise-shell, strengthened with a piece of whalebone, and that it measured six or seven inches from the curve to the point where the line was attached, and an inch and a half between the barb and the stem. Mariner objected that such a hook could hardly have been strong enough to support the whole weight of the Tonga islands; but the chief replied that it was a god's hook and therefore could not break. The hole in the rock in which the divine hook caught on the memorable occasion was shown down to Mariner's time in the island of Hoonga. It was an aperture about two feet square.[1]

§ 5. *The Temples of the Gods*

Some of the primitive gods had houses dedicated to them. These sacred houses or temples, as we may call them, were built in the style of ordinary dwellings; but generally more than ordinary care was taken both in constructing them and in keeping them in good order, decorating their enclosures with flowers, and so on. About twenty of the gods had houses thus consecrated to them; some of them had five or six houses, some only one or two. For example, Tali-y-Toobo, the patron god of the royal family, had four houses dedicated to him in the island of Vavau, two in the island of Lefooga (Lifuka), and two or three others of smaller importance elsewhere.[2] Another patron

iii. 23; Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 133. According to this last writer it was only the low islands that were fished up by Maui; the high islands were thrown down from the sky by the god Hikuleo.

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 272, ii. 114 *sq.* The Catholic missionary Jérôme Grange was told that the hook in question existed down to his time (1843), but that only the king might see it, since it was certain death to anybody else to look on it. See *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) p. 11.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 104 *sq.*

god of the royal family, called Alai Valoo, had a large consecrated enclosure in the island of Ofoo; he had also at least one priest and was very frequently consulted in behalf of sick persons.[1]

To desecrate any of these holy houses or enclosures was a most serious offence. When Mariner was in the islands it happened that two boys, who had belonged to the crew of his ship, were detected in the act of stealing a bale of bark-cloth from a consecrated house. If they had been natives, they would instantly have been punished with death; but the chiefs, taking into consideration the youth and inexperience of the offenders, who were foreigners and ignorant of native customs, decided that for that time the crime might be overlooked. Nevertheless, to appease the anger of the god, to whom the house was consecrated, it was deemed necessary to address him humbly on the subject. Accordingly his priest, followed by chiefs and their ministers (*matabooles*), all dressed in mats with leaves of the *ifi* tree[2] round their necks in token of humility and sorrow, went in solemn procession to the house; they sat down before it, and the priest addressed the divinity to the following purport: "Here you see the chiefs and *matabooles* that have come to thee, hoping that thou wilt be merciful: the boys are young, and being foreigners, are not so well acquainted with our customs, and did not reflect upon the greatness of the crime: we pray thee, therefore, not to punish the people for the sins of these thoughtless youths: we have spared them, and hope that thou wilt be merciful and spare us." The priest then rose up, and they all retired in the same way they had come. The chiefs, and particularly the king, severely reprimanded the boys, endeavouring to impress on their minds the enormity of their offence, and assuring them

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 107 *sq.*

[2] The *ifi* tree, of which the leaves were used by the Tongans in many religious ceremonies, is a species of chestnut (*Inocarpus edulis*) which grows in Indonesia, but is thought to be a native of America. It is supposed that the Polynesians brought the seeds of this tree with them into the Pacific, where it is said to be a cultivated plant. See S. Percy Smith, *Hawaiki, the Original Home of the Maori* (Christchurch, etc., New Zealand, 1910), p. 146. To wear a wreath of the leaves round the neck, and to sit with the head bowed down, constituted the strongest possible expression of humility and entreaty. See E. E. V. Collocot, "Notes on Tongan Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) p. 159.

that they owed their lives only to their presumed ignorance of the heinousness of the crime.[1]

Another case of sacrilege, which occurred in Mariner's time, was attended with more tragic consequences. He tells us that consecrated places might not be the scene of war, and that it would be highly sacrilegious to attack an enemy or to spill his blood within their confines. On one occasion, while Mariner was in the islands, four men, pursued by their enemies, fled for refuge to a consecrated enclosure, where they would have been perfectly safe. One of them was in the act of scrambling over the reed fence, and had got a leg over it, when he was overtaken by a foe, who struck him such a furious blow on the head that he fell dead within the hallowed ground. Conscience-stricken, the slayer fled to his canoe, followed by his men; and on arriving at the fortress where the king was stationed he made a clean breast of his crime, alleging in excuse that it had been committed in hot blood when he had lost all self-command. The king immediately ordered kava to be taken to the priest of his own tutelary god, that the divinity might be consulted as to what atonement was proper to be made for so heinous a sacrilege. Under the double inspiration of kava and the deity, the priest made answer that it was necessary a child should be strangled to appease the anger of the gods. The chiefs then held a consultation and determined to sacrifice the child of a high chief named Toobo Toa. The child was about two years old and had been born to him by a female attendant. On such occasions the child of a male chief by a female attendant was always chosen for the victim first, because, as a child of a chief, he was a worthier victim, and second, because, as a child of a female attendant, he was not himself a chief; for nobility being traced in the female line only those children were reckoned chiefs whose mothers were chieftainesses; the rank of the father, whether noble or not, did not affect the rank of his offspring. On this occasion the father of the child was present at the consultation and consented to the sacrifice. The mother, fearing the decision, had concealed the child, but it was found by one of the searchers, who took it up in his arms, while it smiled with

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 163 *sq.*

delight at being noticed. The mother tried to follow but was held back; and on hearing her voice the child began to cry. But on reaching the place of execution it was pleased and delighted with the bandage that was put round its neck to strangle it, and looking up in the face of the executioner it smiled again. "Such a sight," we are told, "inspired pity in the breast of every one: but veneration and fear of the gods was a sentiment superior to every other, and its destroyer could not help exclaiming, as he put on the fatal bandage, *O iaaoé chi vale!* (poor little innocent!)." Two men then tightened the cord by pulling at each end, and the struggles of the innocent victim were soon over. The little body was next placed upon a sort of hand-barrow, supported on the shoulders of four men, and carried in a procession of priests, chiefs, and *matabooles*, all clothed as suppliants in mats and with wreaths of green leaves round their necks. In this way it was conveyed to various houses dedicated to different gods, before each of which it was placed on the ground, all the company sitting behind it, except one priest, who sat beside it and prayed aloud to the god that he would be pleased to accept of this sacrifice as an atonement for the heinous sacrilege committed, and that punishment might accordingly be withheld from the people. When this had been done before all the consecrated houses in the fortress, the body was given up to its relations, to be buried in the usual manner.[1]

The consecration of a house or a piece of ground to a god was denoted by the native word *taboo*, the general meaning of which was prohibited or forbidden.[2] It was firmly believed by the Tongans in former days that if a man committed sacrilege or broke a taboo, his liver or some other of his internal organs was liable to become enlarged and scirrhous, that is, indurated or knotty; hence they often opened dead bodies out of curiosity, to see whether the deceased had been sacrilegious in their lifetime. As the Tongans are particularly subject to scirrhous tumours, it seems

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 216-219. As to the rule that nobility descended only in the female line, through mothers, not through fathers, see *id.* ii. 84, 95 *sq.*; J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de l'Astrolabe, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. 239.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 220.

probable that many innocent persons were thus posthumously accused of sacrilege on the strength of a post-mortem examination into the state of their livers.[1] Another disagreeable consequence of breaking a taboo was a peculiar liability to be bitten by sharks, which thus might be said to act as ministers of justice. As theft was included under the general head of breach of taboo, a simple way of bringing the crime home to the thief in case of doubt was to cause the accused to go into the water where sharks were known to swarm; if they bit him, he was guilty; if they did not, he was innocent.[2]

§ 6. *Priests and their Inspiration*

Priests were known by the title of *fahe-gehe*, a term which means "split off," "separate," or "distinct from," and was applied to a man who has a peculiar sort of mind or soul, different from that of ordinary men, which disposed some god occasionally to inspire him. Such inspirations frequently happened, and when the fit was on him the priest had the same reverence shown to him as if he were the god himself; at these times even the king would retire to a respectful distance and sit down among the rest of the spectators, because a god was believed to exist at that moment in the priest and to speak from his mouth. But at other times a priest had no other respect paid to him than was due to him for his private rank in society. Priests generally belonged to the lower order of chiefs or to their ministers, the *matabooles*; but sometimes great chiefs were thus visited by the gods, and the king himself has been inspired by Tali-y-Toobo, the chief of the gods.[3] The profession of priest was generally hereditary, the eldest son of a priest becoming, on his father's death, a priest of the same god who had inspired his deceased parent. In their uninspired moments the priests lived indiscriminately with the rest of the people and were treated with no special deference.[4]

The ceremony of inspiration, during which the priest

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 194, note *; compare 434, note *.

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 221.

[3] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 80 *sq.*

[4] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 136-138.

was believed to be possessed by a god and to speak in his name, was regularly accompanied or preceded by a feast, at which the drinking of kava formed the principal feature. The priest himself presided at the feast and the people gathered in a circle round him; or, to be more exact, the people formed an ellipse, of which the priest occupied the place of honour at one of the narrow ends; while opposite him, at the other extremity of the ellipse, sat the man who was charged with the important duty of brewing the kava. At such sessions the chiefs sat indiscriminately among the people on account of the sacredness of the occasion, conceiving that such humble demeanour must be acceptable to the gods. The actual process of inspiration was often witnessed by Mariner, and is described by him in his own words as follows:

"As soon as they are all seated, the priest is considered as inspired, the god being supposed to exist within him from that moment. He remains for a considerable time in silence, with his hands clasped before him; his eyes are cast down, and he rests perfectly still. During the time that the victuals are being shared out, and the cava preparing, the *matabooles* sometimes begin to consult him; sometimes he answers them, at other times not; in either case he remains with his eyes cast down. Frequently he will not utter a word till the repast is finished, and the cava too. When he speaks, he generally begins in a low and very altered tone of voice, which gradually rises to nearly its natural pitch, though sometimes a little above it. All that he says is supposed to be the declaration of the god, and he accordingly speaks in the first person as if he were the god. All this is done generally without any apparent inward emotion or outward agitation; but on some occasions his countenance becomes fierce, and, as it were, inflamed, and his whole frame agitated with inward feeling; he is seized with an universal trembling; the perspiration breaks out on his forehead, and his lips, turning black, are convulsed; at length, tears start in floods from his eyes, his breast heaves with great emotion, and his utterance is choked. These symptoms gradually subside. Before this paroxysm comes on, and after it is over, he often eats as much as four hungry men, under other circum-

stances, could devour. The fit being now gone off, he remains for some time calm, and then takes up a club that is placed by him for the purpose, turns it over and regards it attentively; he then looks up earnestly, now to the right, now to the left, and now again at the club; afterwards he looks up again, and about him in like manner, and then again fixes his eyes upon his club, and so on, for several times: at length he suddenly raises the club, and, after a moment's pause, strikes the ground, or the adjacent part of the house, with considerable force: immediately the god leaves him, and he rises up and retires to the back of the ring among the people."[1]

§ 7. *The Worship of the Gods, Prayers, and Sacrifices*

The worship offered to the gods consisted as usual of prayers and sacrifices. Prayers were put up to them, sometimes in the fields, and sometimes at their consecrated houses. On ordinary occasions a simple offering consisted of a small piece of kava root deposited before a god's house.[2] But in the great emergencies of life the favour of the gods was sued with more precious offerings. When the younger daughter of Finow, a girl of six or seven years, was sick to death, the dying princess was carried from her father's house into the sacred enclosure of Tali-y-Toobo, the patron god of the kings, and there she remained for a fortnight. Almost every morning a hog was killed, dressed, and presented before the god's house to induce him to spare the life of the princess. At the same time prayers were addressed to the deity for the recovery of the patient; but as this particular god had no priest, the prayers were offered by a minister (*mataboole*), sometimes by two or three in succession, and they were repeated five, six, or seven times a day. Their general purport was as follows: "Here thou seest assembled Finow and his chiefs, and the principal ministers (*matabooles*) of thy favoured land; thou seest them humbled before thee. We pray thee not to be merciless, but to spare the life of

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 99-101. Compare E. E. V. Collocot, "Notes on Tongan Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) pp. 155-157.

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 224.

the woman for the sake of her father, who has always been attentive to every religious ceremony. But if thy anger is justly excited by some crime or misdemeanour committed by any other of us who are here assembled, we entreat thee to inflict on the guilty one the punishment which he merits, and not to let loose thy vengeance on one who was born but as yesterday. For our own parts, why do we wish to live but for the sake of Finow? But if his family is afflicted, we are all afflicted, innocent as well as guilty. How canst thou be merciless? Have regard for Finow and spare the life of his daughter." When despite of prayers and the sacrifices of pigs, the girl grew daily worse instead of better, she was removed to many other consecrated enclosures of other gods, one after the other, where the like fond prayers and fruitless offerings were presented in the vain hope of staving off the approach of death.[1]

But more precious sacrifices than the blood of hogs were often laid at the feet of the angry gods. When a relation of a superior rank was ill, it was a very common practice for one or more of his or her inferior kinsfolk to have a little finger, or a joint of a finger, cut off as a sacrifice to induce the offended deity to spare the sick man or woman. So common was the custom in the old days that there was scarcely a person living in the Tonga islands who had not thus lost one or both of his little fingers, or a considerable portion of both. It does not appear that the operation was very painful. Mariner witnessed more than once little children quarrelling for the honour of having it performed on them. The finger was laid flat upon a block of wood: a knife, axe, or sharp stone was placed with the edge on the joint to be severed, and a powerful blow with a hammer or heavy stone effected the amputation. Sometimes an affectionate relative would perform the operation on his or her own hand. John Williams questioned a girl of eighteen who had hacked off her own little finger with a sharp shell to induce the gods to spare her sick mother. Generally a joint was taken off at a time; but some persons had smaller portions amputated to admit of the operation being often repeated in case they had many superior relations,

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 350-360.

who might be sick and require the sacrifice. When they had no more joints which they could conveniently spare, they rubbed the stumps of the mutilated fingers till the blood streamed from the wounds; then they would hold up the bleeding hands in hope of softening the heart of the angry god.[1] Captain Cook understood that the operation was performed for the benefit of the sufferers themselves to heal them in sickness,[2] and the same view was apparently taken by the French navigator Labillardière,[3] but in this they were probably mistaken; neither of them had an accurate knowledge of the language, and they may easily have misunderstood their informants. Perhaps the only person in the islands who was exempt from the necessity of occasionally submitting to the painful sacrifice was the divine chief Tooitonga, who, as he ranked above everybody, even above the king, could have no superior relation for whom to amputate a finger-joint. Certainly we know that Tooitonga had not, like the rest of his countrymen, to undergo the painful operations of tattooing and circumcision; if he desired to be tattooed or circumcised, he was obliged to go to other islands, particularly to Samoa, for the purpose.[4] Perhaps, though this is not mentioned by our authorities, it would have been deemed impious to shed his sacred blood in his native land.

But sacrifices to the gods for the recovery of the sick were not limited to the amputation of finger-joints. Not uncommonly children were strangled for this purpose.[5] Thus when Finow the king was grievously sick and seemed likely to die, the prince, his son, and a young chief went out to procure one of the king's own children by a female attendant

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 438 *sq.*, ii. 210-212; Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 239, 278; John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 470 *sq.*; Jérôme Grange, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) pp. 12, 26; Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 128.

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 204, v. 421 *sq.* However, in a footnote to the latter passage Captain Cook gives the correct explanation of the custom on the authority of Captain King: "It is common for the inferior people to cut off a joint of their little finger, on account of the sickness of the chiefs to whom they belong."

[3] Labillardière, *Relation du Voyage à la recherche de la Pérouse* (Paris, 1800), ii. 151.

[4] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 79, 268.

[5] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 208 *sq.*

to sacrifice it as a vicarious offering to the gods, that their anger might be appeased and the health of its father restored. They found the child sleeping in its mother's lap in a neighbouring house ; they took it away by force, and retiring with it behind an adjacent burial-ground (*fytoca*) they strangled it with a band of bark-cloth. Then they carried it before two consecrated houses and a grave, at each place gabbling a short but appropriate prayer to the god, that he would intercede with the other gods in behalf of the dying king, and would accept of this sacrifice as an atonement for the sick man's crimes.[1] When, not long afterwards, the divine chief Tooitonga, in spite of his divinity, fell sick and seemed like to die, one or other of his young relations had a little finger cut off every day, as a propitiatory offering to the gods for the sins of the saintly sufferer. But these sacrifices remaining fruitless, recourse was had to greater. Three or four children were strangled at different times, and prayers were offered up by the priests at the consecrated houses and burial-grounds (*fytocas*), but all in vain. The gods remained deaf to the prayers of the priests ; their hearts were not touched by the cutting off of fingers or the strangling of children ; and the illness of the sacred chief grew every day more alarming. As a last resort and desperate remedy, the emaciated body of the dying man was carried into the kitchen, the people imagining that such an act of humility, performed on behalf of the highest dignitary of the Tonga islands, would surely move the deities to compassion and induce them to spare a life so precious to his subjects.[2] The same curious remedy had shortly before been resorted to for the benefit of the dying or dead king, Finow the First : his body was carried into the kitchen of the sacred chief, the Tooitonga, and there placed over the hole in the ground where the fire was lighted to cook victuals : "this was thought to be acceptable to the gods, as being a mark of extreme humiliation, that the great chief of all the Hapai islands and Vavaoo, should be laid where the meanest class of mankind, the cooks, were accustomed to operate."[3]

[1] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 366.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 438 *sq.*; compare *id.* ii. 214.

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 367 *sq.*

The custom of strangling the relations of a sick chief as a vicarious sacrifice to appease the anger of the deity and ensure the recovery of the patient was found in vogue by the first missionaries to Tonga before the arrival of Mariner. When King Moomōoe lay very sick and his death was hourly expected, one of his sons sent for a younger brother under pretence of wishing to cut off his little fingers as a sacrifice to save the life of their dying father. The young man came, whereupon his elder brother had him seized, strangled, and buried within a few yards of the house where the missionaries were living. Afterwards the fratricide came and mourned over his murdered brother by sitting on the grave with his elbows on his knees and covering his face with his hands. In this posture he remained for a long time in silence, and then departed very thoughtful. His motive for thus mourning over the brother whom he had done to death is not mentioned by the missionaries and was probably not known to them. We may conjecture that it was not so much remorse for his crime as fear of his brother's ghost, who otherwise might have haunted him.[1] Morality, or at all events a semblance of it, has often been thus reinforced by superstitious terrors.

In recording this incident the missionaries make use of an expression which seems to set the strangling of human beings for the recovery of sick relations in a somewhat different light. They say that "the prince of darkness has impressed the idea on them, that the strength of the person strangled will be transferred into the sick, and recover him."[2] On this theory the sacrifice acts, so to say, mechanically without the intervention of a deity; the life of the victim is transfused into the body of the patient as a sort of tonic which strengthens and revives him. Such a rite is therefore magical rather than religious; it depends for its efficacy on natural causes, and not on the pity and help of the gods. Yet the missionaries, who record this explanation of the custom, elsewhere implicitly accept the religious interpretation of such rites as vicarious

[1] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 238-240.

[2] Captain James Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 240.

sacrifices; for they say that among the superstitious notions of the natives concerning spirits was one that "by strangling some relations of the chief when he is sick, the deity will be appeased, and he (that is, the sick chief) will recover."[1] Perhaps both explanations, the religious and the magical, were assigned by the Tongans: consistency of thought is as little characteristic of savage as of civilised man: provided he attains his ends, he recks little of the road by which he reaches them. An English sailor named Ambler, who had resided for thirteen months in Tonga before the arrival of the missionaries, told them, "that when a great chief lay sick they often strangled their women, to the number of three or four at a time."[2] Such a sacrifice is more likely to have been religious than magical; we may suppose that the victims were rather offered to the gods as substitutes for the chief than killed to recruit his failing strength by an infusion of their health and vigour. A chief would probably have disdained the idea of drawing fresh energy from the bodies of women, though he might be ready enough to believe that the gods would consent to accept their life as a proxy for his own. It is true that elsewhere, notably in Uganda, human beings have been killed to prolong the life of the king by directly transferring their strength to him;[3] but in such cases it would seem that the victims have invariably been men and not women.

§ 8. *The Doctrine of the Soul and its Destiny after Death*

Thus far we have dealt with the primary or superior gods, who were believed to have been always gods, and about whose origin nothing was known. We now pass to a consideration of the secondary or inferior gods, whose origin was perfectly well known, since they were all of them the souls of dead chiefs or nobles, of whom some had died or been killed in recent years. But before we take

[1] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 257.

[2] Captain James Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 278. This Ambler was a man of very indifferent, not to say infamous, character, but he rendered the missionaries considerable service by instructing them in the Tongan language, which he spoke fluently. See Captain James Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 98, 244 *sq.*

[3] See *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, Third Edition, ii. 219 *sqq.*

up the subject of their worship, it will be well to say a few words on the Tongan doctrine of the human soul, since these secondary deities were avowedly neither more nor less than human souls raised to a higher power by death.

The Tongans, in their native state, before the advent of Europeans, did not conceive of the soul as a purely immaterial essence, that being a conception too refined for the thought of a savage. They imagined it to be the finer or more aeriform part of the body which leaves it suddenly at the moment of death, and which may be thought to stand in the same relation to the body as the perfume of a flower to its solid substance. They had no proper word to express this fine ethereal part of man; for the word *loto*, though it might sometimes be used for that purpose, yet rather means a man's disposition, inclination, passion, or sentiment. The soul was supposed to exist throughout the whole of the body, but to be particularly present in the heart, the pulsation of which they regarded as the strength and power of the soul. They did not clearly distinguish between the life and the soul, but said that the right auricle of the heart was the seat of life. They took the liver to be the seat of courage, and professed to have remarked, on opening dead bodies, that the largest livers belonged to the bravest men, in which observation they were careful to make allowance for the enlargement of livers consequent on disease.[1]

They acknowledged that the *tooas* or lower order of people had minds or souls; but they firmly believed that these vulgar souls died with their bodies and consequently had no future existence. In this aristocratic opinion the generality of the commoners acquiesced, though some were vain enough to think that they had souls like their betters, and that they would live hereafter in Bolotoo. But the orthodox Tongan doctrine restricted immortality to chiefs and their ministers (the *matabooles*); at most, by a stretch of charity, it extended the privilege to the *mooas* or third estate; but it held out no hope of salvation to *tooas*, who formed the fourth and lowest rank of society.[2]

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 127 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 419, ii. 99, 128 *sq.*

Mariner's account, which I have followed, of the sharp distinction which the Tongans drew between the immortality of chiefs and the mortality of common people is confirmed by the testimony of other and independent observers. According to Captain Cook, while the souls of the chiefs went immediately after death to the island of Boolootoo (Bolotoo), the souls of the lower sort of people underwent a sort of transmigration or were eaten by a bird called *loata*, which walked upon their graves for that purpose.[1] The first missionaries, who landed in Tongataboo in 1797, report that the natives "believe the immortality of the soul, which at death, they say, is immediately conveyed in a very large fast-sailing canoe to a distant country called Doobludha, which they describe as resembling the Mahometan paradise. They call the god of this region of pleasure Higgolayo, and esteem him as the greatest and most powerful of all others, the rest being no better than servants to him. This doctrine, however, is wholly confined to the chiefs, for the *tooas* (or lower order) can give no account whatever; as they reckon the enjoyments of Doobludha above their capacity, so they seem never to think of what may become of them after they have served the purposes of this life."[2] One of these first missionaries was a certain George Veeson, who had been a bricklayer before he undertook to convert the heathen to Christianity. Wearying, however, of missionary work, he deserted his brethren and betook himself to the heathen, among whom he lived as one of them, adopting the native garb, marrying native women, and eagerly fighting in the wars of the natives among themselves. In this way he acquired a considerable knowledge of the Tongan language and customs, of which he made some use in the account of his experiences which he published anonymously after his return to England. Speaking of Tongan ideas concerning the immortality of the soul he says that he heard the chiefs speak much of Bulotu (Bolotoo). "Into this region, however, they believed none

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 423.

[2] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 278 *sq.*

were admitted but themselves. The Tuas, or lower class, having no hope of sharing such bliss, seldom speculate upon a futurity, which to them appears a subject lost in shadows, clouds, and darkness."[1] The missionaries reported to Commodore Wilkes that the spirits of all chiefs were supposed to go to Bolotoo, while the souls of poor people remained in this world to feed upon ants and lizards.[2] With regard to the fate of the soul after death, the Tongans universally and positively believed in the existence of a great island, lying at a considerable distance to the north-west, which they considered to be the abode of their gods and of the souls of their dead nobles and their ministers (the *matabooles*). This island they supposed to be much larger than all their own islands put together, and to be well stocked with all kinds of useful and ornamental plants, always in a high state of perfection, and always bearing the richest fruits and the most beautiful flowers according to their respective natures; they thought that when these fruits or flowers were plucked, others immediately took their place, and that the whole atmosphere was filled with the most delightful fragrance that the imagination can conceive, exhaled from these immortal plants. The island, too, was well stocked with the most beautiful birds, of all imaginable kinds, as well as with abundance of hogs; and all of these creatures were immortal, except when they were killed to provide food for the gods. But the moment a hog or a bird was killed, another live hog or bird came into existence to supply its place, just as happened with the fruits and flowers; and this, so far as they could ascertain, was the only way in which plants and animals were propagated in Bolotoo. So far away was the happy island supposed to be that it was dangerous for living men

[1] Quoted by Miss Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 131. As to Veeson, see *id.* pp. 78, 85 *sqq.* The title of his book is given (p. 87) as *Authentic Narrative of a Four Years' Residence in Tongataboo* (London: Longman & Co., 1815). I have not seen the book. The man's name is given as Vason by (Sir) Basil Thomson in his *Diversions of a Prime Minister* (Edinburgh and London, 1894), pp. 326, 327, 329, 331; but his real name seems to have been George Veeson. See Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 6, 230.

[2] Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, iii. 22.

to attempt to sail thither in their canoes; indeed, except by the express permission of the gods, they could not find the island, however near they might come to it. They tell, however, of a Tongan canoe which, returning from Fiji, was driven by stress of weather to Bolotoo. The crew knew not the place, and being in want of provisions and seeing the country to abound in all sorts of fruits, they landed and proceeded to pluck some bread-fruit. But to their unspeakable astonishment they could no more lay hold of the fruit than if it were a shadow; they walked through the trunks of the trees and passed through the substance of the houses without feeling any shock or resistance. At length they saw some of the gods, who passed through the men's bodies as if they were empty space. These gods recommended them to go away immediately, as they had no proper food for them, and they promised them a fair wind and a speedy passage. So the men put to sea, and sailing with the utmost speed they arrived at Samoa, where they stayed two or three days. Thence, again sailing very fast, they returned to Tonga, where in the course of a few days they all died, not as a punishment for having been at Bolotoo, but as a natural consequence, the air of that place, as it were, infecting mortal bodies with speedy death. The gods who dwell in Bolotoo have no canoes, not requiring them; for if they wish to be anywhere, there they are the moment the wish is felt.[1]

It is said that in order to people Bolotoo the god Hikuleo used to carry off the first-born sons of chiefs and other great men, whom he transported to the island of the gods. To such lengths did he go in this system of abduction that men on earth grew very uneasy. Their ranks became thinner and thinner. How was all this to end? At last the other gods were moved to compassion. The two gods Tangaloa and Maui laid hold of brother Hikuleo, passed a strong chain round his waist and between his legs, and then taking the chain by the ends they fastened one of them to the sky and the other to the earth. Thus trussed up, the deity still made many attempts to snatch away first-born sons; but

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 101-103.

all his efforts were thwarted and baffled by the chain, for no sooner did he dart out in one direction, than the chain pulled him back in another. According to another, or the same story, the excursions of the deity were further limited by the length of his tail, the end of which was tethered to the cave in which he resided; and though the tail was long and allowed him a good deal of rope, do what he would, he could not break bounds or obtain more than a very partial view of what was going on in the rest of the world.[1]

In this curious story we may perhaps detect a tradition of a time when among the Tongans, as among the Semites, religion or superstition demanded the sacrifice of all first-born sons, a barbarous custom which has been practised by not a few peoples in various parts of the earth.[2]

The human soul after its separation from the body at death was termed a *hotooa* or *atua*, that is, a god or spirit, and was believed to exist in the shape of the body and to have the same propensities as in life, but to be corrected by a more enlightened understanding, by which it readily distinguished good from evil, truth from falsehood, and right from wrong. The souls dwelt for ever in the happy regions of Bolotoo, where they bore the same names as in life and held the same rank among themselves as they had held during their mortal existence. But their lot in Bolotoo was in no way affected by the good or evil which they had done on earth;

[1] Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, pp. 132 *sq.* As to Hikuleo and his long tail, see also Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, iii. 23, "Hikuleo is the god of spirits, and is the third in order of time; he dwells in a cave in the island. Bulotu is most remarkable for a long tail, which prevents him from going farther from the cave in which he resides than its length will admit of." Here the god Hikuleo appears to be confused with the island of Bulotu (Bulotoo) in which he resided. Tradition wavers on the question whether Hikuleo was a god or goddess, "but the general suffrage seems in favour of the female sex." See E. E. V. Collocot, "Notes on Tongan Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) pp. 152, 153.

[2] As to a custom of putting the first-born to death, see *The Dying God*, pp. 178 *sqq.*; and for other reported instances of the custom, see Mrs. James Smith, *The Booandik Tribe of South Australia* (Adelaide, 1880), pp. 7 *sq.*; C. E. Fox, "Social Organisation in San Cristoval, Solomon Islands," *Journal of the R. Anthropological Institute*, xlix. (1919) p. 100; E. O. Martin, *The Gods of India* (London and Toronto, 1914), p. 215; N. W. Thomas, *Anthropological Report on the Ibo-speaking peoples of Nigeria*, Part i. (London, 1913) p. 12. Compare E. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* (London, 1906), i. 458 *sqq.*

for the Tongans did not believe in a future state of retribution for deeds done in the body; they thought that the gods punished crime in this present world, without waiting to redress the balance of justice in the world to come. As many of the nobles who passed at death to Bolotoo had been warlike and turbulent in their life, it might naturally be anticipated that they should continue to wage war on each other in the land beyond the grave; but that was not so, for by a merciful dispensation their understandings were so much enlightened, or their tempers so much improved, by their residence in Bolotoo, that any differences they might have between themselves, or with the primitive gods, they adjusted by temperate discussion without resort to violence; though people in Tonga sometimes heard an echo and caught a glimpse of these high debates in the rumble of thunder and the flash of lightning.[1] In the blissful abode of Bolotoo the souls of chiefs and nobles lived for ever, being not subject to a second death, and there they feasted upon all the favourite productions of their native country, which grew also abundantly in the happy island.[2]

A less cheerful picture, however, of the state of souls in the other world was painted for Commodore Wilkes by the missionaries who furnished him with information on the native religion of the Tongans. According to them, the souls were forced to become the servants, or rather slaves, of the long-tailed deity Hikuleo, whose commands they had no choice but to execute. His house and all things in it were even constructed of the souls of the dead; and he went so far as to make fences out of them and bars to his gates, an indignity which must have been deeply resented by the proud spirits of kings and nobles.[3] How this gloomy picture of the fate of souls in Bolotoo is to be reconciled with the bright descriptions of it which I have drawn from the pages of Mariner and Cook, it is not easy to say. Apparently we must acquiesce in the discrepancy. That savages should

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 110 *sq.*, 130, 131, 139, 140.

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 423.

[3] Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, iii. 23. The writer here speaks of Bulotu, where he should have said Hikuleo. See above, p. 89, note [1].

entertain inconsistent views on the life after death need not surprise us, when we remember how little accurate information even civilised peoples possess on that momentous subject.

§ 9. *The Souls of the Dead as Gods*

We have seen that according to Mariner, our best authority on Tongan religion, the souls of dead nobles ranked as gods, possessing all the powers and attributes of the primary or original deities, though in an inferior degree.[1] Thus, like the primary gods, they had the power of returning to Tonga to inspire priests, relations, or other people.[2] For example, the son of Finow, the King, used to be inspired by the spirit of Toogoo Ahoo, a former king of Tonga, who had been assassinated with the connivance of his successor, Finow. One day Mariner asked this young chief how he felt when he was visited by the spirit of the murdered monarch. The chief replied that he could not well describe his feelings, but the best he could say of it was, that he felt himself all over in a glow of heat and quite restless and uncomfortable; he did not feel his personal identity, as it were, but seemed to have a mind differing from his own natural mind, his thoughts wandering upon strange and unusual topics, though he remained perfectly sensible of surrounding objects. When Mariner asked him how he knew it was the spirit of Toogoo Ahoo who possessed him, the chief answered impatiently, "There's a fool! How can I tell you how I knew it? I felt and knew it was so by a kind of consciousness; my mind told me that it was Toogoo Ahoo." Similarly Finow himself, the father of this young man, used occasionally to be inspired by the ghost of Moomooi, a former king of Tonga.[3]

Again, the souls of dead nobles, like gods, had the power of appearing in dreams and visions to their relatives and others to admonish and warn them. It was thought, for example, that Finow the king was occasionally visited by a deceased son of his; the ghost did not appear, but announced

[1] W. Mariner, *Tongan Islands*, ii. 97, 99, 103, 109 *sq.* See above, pp. 64 *sq.*, 66.

[2] W. Mariner, ii. 130 *sq.*; compare *id.* pp. 99, 103 *sq.*, 109 *sq.*

[3] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 104 *sq.*

his presence by whistling. Mariner once heard this whistling when he was with the king and some chiefs in a house at night; it was dark, and the sound appeared to come from the loft of the house. In Mariner's opinion the sound was produced by some trick of Finow's, but the natives believed it to be the voice of a spirit.[1] Once more, when Finow the king was himself dead, a noble lady who mourned his death and generally slept on his grave, communicated to his widow a dream which she had dreamed several nights at the graveyard. She said that in her dream the late king appeared to her, and, with a countenance full of sorrow, asked why there yet remained so many evil-designing persons in the islands; for he declared that, since he had been at Bolotoo, he had been disturbed by the plots of wicked men conspiring against his son; therefore was he come to warn her of the danger. Finally, he bade her set in order the pebbles on his grave, and pay every attention to his burial-ground. With that he vanished.[2] In such dreams of the reappearance of the recent dead we may discover one source of the belief in the survival of the soul after death.

But the gods appeared to mankind to warn, comfort, and advise, not only in their own divine form but also in the form of animals. Thus the primitive gods, according to Mariner, sometimes entered into the living bodies of lizards, porpoises, and a species of water snake. Hence these creatures were much respected. The reason why gods entered into porpoises was to take care of canoes. This power of assuming the form of living animals, says Mariner, belonged only to the original gods, and not to the deified souls of chiefs.[3] In thus denying that the spirits of the dead were supposed sometimes to revisit the earth in animal shapes Mariner was perhaps mistaken, for a different view on the subject was apparently taken at a later time by Miss Farmer, who had access to good sources of information. She writes as follows: "Bulotu (Bolotoo) was peopled with the spirits of departed chiefs and great persons of both sexes; and it was to these chiefly that worship was paid and that

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 110, 130 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 423 *sq.*

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 99, 131.

sacrifices were offered. These spirits in Bulotu were supposed to act as intercessors with the supreme gods, who were too highly exalted to be approached by men except in this way. The spirits were in the habit of revisiting earth. They would come in birds, or in fish as their shrines. The tropic-bird, king-fisher, and sea-gull, the sea-eel, shark, whale, and many other animals were considered sacred, because they were favourite shrines of these spirit-gods. The heathen never killed any of these creatures ; and if, in sailing, they chanced to find themselves in the neighbourhood of a whale, they would offer scented oil or kava to him. To some among the natives the cuttle-fish and the lizard were gods ; while others would lay offerings at the foot of certain trees, with the idea of their being inhabited by spirits. A rainbow or a shooting star would also command worship." [1]

This account seems to imply that the spirits which took the form of these animals, birds, and fish were believed to be the souls of the dead returning from the spirit world to revisit their old homes on earth. But even if we suppose that herein the writer was mistaken, and that, as Mariner affirmed, only the original and superior gods were deemed capable of incarnation in animal shape, the account is still valuable and interesting because it calls attention to a side of Tongan religion on which our principal authority, Mariner, is almost silent. That side comprises the worship of natural objects, and especially of animals, birds, and fish, regarded as embodiments of spirits, whether gods or ghosts. This worship of nature, and particularly of animated nature, was highly developed among the Samoans ; it would be natural, therefore, to find the same system in vogue among their neighbours and near kinsmen the Tongans, though our authorities on Tongan religion say little about it. The system may with some appearance of probability be regarded as a relic of a former practice of totemism.[2]

In recent years a considerable amount of evidence bearing on the subject has been collected by Mr. E. E. V. Collocot. He distinguishes the national Tongan gods from

[1] Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, pp. 126 *sq.*

[2] See below, pp. 182 *sqq.*, 200 *sqq.*

the gods of tribes, clans, and small groups of allied households; such a group of households, it appears, formed the ordinary social unit. Indeed, he tells us that there was nothing to prevent a man from setting up a tutelary deity of his own, if he were so disposed; he might adopt almost any object for the religious reverence of his household and himself. Thus there was "a gradation in the divine hierarchy from gods of populous tribes down to deities the private possession of a very few."[1] Further, Mr. Collocot found that most of the gods had sacred animals or other natural objects associated with them,[2] and that the worshippers were generally forbidden to eat the sacred animals of their gods. He concludes that "in the period of which we have information totemism has given way to a more highly developed polytheism, but there are indications that the development was by way of totemism."[3] Among the facts which appear to support this conclusion we may note the following.

There was a great god called Boolotoo Katoa, that is, "the whole of Boolotoo (Bolotoo)," who had the dog for his sacred animal; while the deity was being worshipped, a dog lay at the side of the priest. This god had his principal shrine at Boha in the eastern part of Tongataboo: the district was of old the centre of government and the residence of the Tooitonga.[4] Another god, whose name was the King of the tribe or clan of Fonua (*Tui-Haafakafonua*), had for his sacred animal a lizard, and for the convenience of his departure, and presumably arrival, a tree or post was always provided for him to crawl along. A handy post or tree-stump was a regular part of his temple furnishings.[5] Another god, whose name signifies "Proud Boastfulness of the Season" (*Mofuta-ae-ta'u*), had for his sacred animal a great sea-eel, which dwelt in an opening of the reef opposite the village. This deity used to take it very ill if anybody appeared on the beach near his abode wearing a turban or whitened with lime; and should a man rashly disregard

[1] E. E. V. Collocot, "Notes on Tongan Religion," *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) pp. 154 *sq.*, 159.

[2] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 160, 161.

[3] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 159 *sq.*

[4] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 162.

[5] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 227.

the feelings of the divine eel in these respects, it was believed that the deity would carry him off to his hole in the rock.[1] Another god, named Haele-feke, used to manifest himself in the form of an octopus (*feke*). Whenever an octopus appeared in a certain pool, it was at once recognised as the god, and the priestess immediately went and awaited him at the shrine, which seems to have been a small raised platform. Thither the people presently resorted, bringing bunches of coco-nuts and coco-nut leaves and earth. The priestess thereupon spoke as in the person of the octopus, and apparently imitated the creature, presumably by sprawling in the ungainly manner of an octopus. The worshippers of this deity abstained from eating the flesh of the octopus, and even from approaching a place where other people were eating it. If any of them transgressed the taboo, he was afflicted with complete baldness. Should any of the worshippers find a dead octopus, they buried it with all due ceremony in Teekiu, their principal village.[2] The rail bird (*kalae*) was worshipped by some people, who used to tie bunches of the birds together and carry them about with them when they travelled; and the priest had a bunch of the sacred birds tattooed as a badge on his throat.[3] The clan Fainga'a had for its sacred animal the mullet; and it is said that young mullets were tabooed to the men of the clan.[4] A family group in Haapai had the owl for their sacred creature; if an owl hooted near a house in the afternoon, it was a sign that there was a pregnant woman in the household.[5] The god of Uiha in Haapai was the Eel-in-the-Open-Sea (*Toke-i-Moana*); as usual, the worshippers might not eat the flesh of eels or approach a place where an eel was being cooked.[6] The clan Falefa worshipped two goddesses, Jiji and Fainga'a, whose sacred creature was the heron. Jiji was supposed to be incarnate in the dark-coloured heron, and Fainga'a in the light-coloured heron. When a pair of herons, one dark and the other light-coloured, were seen flying together, people said

[1] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 161, 233.
[2] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 227 *sq.*
[3] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 231 *sq.*
[4] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 234.
[5] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 234.
[6] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 234 *sq.*

that it was the two goddesses Jiji and Fainga'a.[1] In the island of Tofua there was a clan called the King of Tofua (*Tui Tofua*), which had the shark for its god; members of the clan might not eat the flesh of sharks, because they believed themselves to be related to the fish; they said that long ago some of the clansmen leaped from a canoe into the sea and were turned into sharks.[2] Another god who appeared in the form of a shark was Taufa of the Sea (*Taufa-tahi*); but in another aspect he was a god of the land (*Taufa-uta*) and a notable protector of gardens. To secure his aid the husbandman had only to plait a cocoanut leaf in the likeness of a shark and to hang it up in his plantation; a garden thus protected was under a taboo which no one would dare to violate. A Christian, who ventured to thrust his hand in mockery into the maw of the sham shark, had both his arms afterwards bitten off by a real shark.[3] Other gods were recognised in the shape of flying-foxes, shell-fish, and little blue and green lizards.[4] We hear of two Tongan gods who had black volcanic pebbles for their sacred objects,[5] and of one whose shrine was the tree called *fehi*, the hard wood of which was commonly used for making spears and canoes.[6] The gods of Niua Fo'ou, one of the most distant islands of the Tongan group, were three in number, to wit, the octopus, pig's liver, and a large lump of coral. The worshippers of the two former deities might not eat the divine octopus and the divine pig's liver.[7] Christianity itself appears not to have wholly extinguished the reverence of the natives for the sacred animals of their clans. A much-respected native minister of the Methodist Church informed Mr. Collocot that to this day he gets a headache if he eats the sacred animal of his clan, though other people may partake of the creature, not only with impunity, but with relish.[8]

Thus the worship of natural objects, and especially of animals, fish, and birds, presents a close analogy to the

[1] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 232.
[2] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 238 *sq.*
[3] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 229.
[4] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 230, 231, 233.
[5] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* pp. 230, 233.
[6] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 232.
[7] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 239.
[8] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 160.

Samoan system, as we shall see presently;[1] and it is not without significance that tradition points to Samoa as the original home from which the ancestors of the Tongans migrated to their present abode.[2] On the question of the nature of the divine beings who presented themselves to their worshippers in the form of animals, the evidence collected by Mr. Collocot seems to confirm the statement of Mariner, that only the primary or non-human gods were believed capable of thus becoming incarnate; at least Mr. Collocot gives no hint that the worshipful creatures were supposed to be tenanted by the souls of the human dead; in other words, there is nothing to show that the Tongan worship of animals was based on a theory of transmigration.

The statement of Miss Farmer, which I have quoted, that among the Tongans the souls of the dead were the principal object of worship and received the most sacrifices, is interesting and not improbable, though it is not confirmed by Mariner. It may indeed, perhaps, be laid down as a general principle that the worship of the dead tends constantly to encroach on the worship of the high gods, who are pushed ever farther into the background by the advent of their younger rivals. It is natural enough that this should be so. The affection which we feel for virtue, the reverence and awe inspired by great talents and powerful characters, persist long after the objects of our love and admiration have passed away from earth, and we now render to their memories the homage which we paid, or perhaps grudged, to the men themselves in their lifetime. For us they seem still to exist; with their features, their characteristic turns of thought and speech still fresh in our memories, we can hardly bring ourselves to believe that they have utterly ceased to be, that nothing of them remains but the lifeless dust which we have committed to the earth. The heart still clings fondly to the hope, if not to the belief, that somewhere beyond our ken the loved and lost ones are joined to the kindred spirits who have gone before in that unknown land, where, in due time, we shall meet them again. And as with affection, so with reverence and fear; they also are powerful incentives to this instinctive belief in the

[1] See below, pp. 154 *sq.*

[2] E. E. V. Collocot, *op. cit.* p. 239.

continued existence of the dead. The busy brain that explored the heights and depths of this mysterious universe—the glowing imagination that conjured up visions of beauty born, as we fondly think, for immortality—the aspiring soul and vaulting ambition that founded or overturned empires and shook the world—are they now no more than a few mouldering bones or a handful of ashes under their marble monuments? The mind of most men revolts from a conclusion so derogatory to what they deem the dignity of human nature; and so to satisfy at once the promptings of the imagination and the impulse of the heart, men gradually elevate their dead to the rank of saints and heroes, who in course of time may easily pass by an almost insensible transition to the supreme place of deities. It is thus that, almost as far back as we can trace the gropings of the human mind, man has been perpetually creating gods in his own likeness.

In a pantheon thus constantly recruited by the accession of dead men, the recruits tend to swamp the old deities by sheer force of numbers; for whereas the muster-roll of the original gods is fixed and unchangeable, the newcomers form a great host which is not only innumerable but perpetually on the increase, for who can reckon up the tale of the departed or set bounds to the ravages of death? Indeed, where the deification of the dead is carried to its logical limit, a new god is born for every man that dies; though in Tonga against such an extreme expansion of the spiritual hierarchy, and a constant overcrowding of Bolotoo, a solid barrier was interposed by the Tongan doctrine which opened the gates of paradise only to noblemen.[1]

[1] We have seen (p. 70) that according to Mariner the number of the original gods was about three hundred; but as to the deified noblemen he merely says that "of these there must be a vast number" (*Tonga Islands*, ii. 109). In his "Notes on Tongan Religion" (*Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) p. 159) Mr. E. E. V. Collocot remarks: "The number of the gods, moreover, was liable to constant augmentation by the deification of the illustrious or well-beloved dead." As a notable instance he cites the case of a certain chief named Fakailoatonga, a native of Vavau, who subdued or overran a large part of Tongataboo. He was a leper, but for a long time did not know the true nature of his malady. When he learned the truth, he in disgust buried himself alive, and after his death he was elevated to the godhead. But in this deification, if Mariner is right, there was nothing exceptional; as a chief he became a god after death in the course of nature.

§ 10. *Temples and Tombs: Megalithic Monuments*

On the whole it seems reasonable to conclude that in Tonga the distinction between the original superhuman deities and the new human gods tended to be obliterated in the minds of the people. More and more, we may suppose, the deified spirits of dead men usurped the functions and assimilated themselves to the character of the ancient divinities. Yet between these two classes of worshipful beings Mariner draws an important distinction which we must not overlook. He says that these new human gods, these souls of deified nobles, "have no houses dedicated to them, but the proper places to invoke them are their graves, which are considered sacred, and are therefore as much respected as consecrated houses."[1] If this distinction is well founded, the consecrated house or temple, as we may call it, of an original god was quite different from the grave at which a new god, that is, a dead man or woman, was worshipped. But in spite of the high authority of Mariner it seems doubtful whether the distinction which he makes between the temples of the old gods and the tombs of the new ones was always recognised in practice, and whether the two were not apt to be confounded in the minds even of the natives. The temples of the gods, as we have seen, did not differ in shape and structure from the houses of men, and similar houses, as we shall see, were also built on the graves of kings and chiefs and even of common people. What was easier than to confuse the two classes of spirit-houses, the houses of gods and the houses of dead kings or chiefs, especially when the memory of these potentates had grown dim and their human personality had been forgotten? Certainly European observers have sometimes been in doubt as to whether places to which the natives paid religious reverence were temples or graves. In view of this ambiguity I propose to examine some of the descriptions which have been given by eye-witnesses of the sacred structures and enclosure which might be interpreted either as temples or tombs. The question has a double interest and importance,

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 110.

first, in its bearing on the theory, enunciated by Herbert Spencer, that temples are commonly, if not universally, derived from tombs,[1] and gods from dead men; and secondly, in its bearing on the question of the origin and meaning of megalithic monuments; for not a few of the tombs of Tongan kings and sacred chiefs are constructed in part of very large stones.

I will begin with the evidence of Captain Cook, an excellent observer and faithful witness. He paid two visits to the Tonga islands, a short one in 1773, and a longer one of between two and three months in 1777. Speaking of his first visit to Tongataboo in 1773, he writes as follows:

"After sitting here some time, and distributing some presents to those about us, we signified our desire to see the country. The chief immediately took the hint, and conducted us along a lane that led to an open green, on the one side of which was a house of worship built on a mount that had been raised by the hand of man, about sixteen or eighteen feet above the common level. It had an oblong figure, and was inclosed by a wall or parapet of stone, about three feet in height. From this wall the mount rose with a gentle slope, and was covered with a green turf. On the top of it stood the house, which had the same figure as the mount, about twenty feet in length, and fourteen or sixteen broad. As soon as we came before the place, every one seated himself on the green, about fifty or sixty yards from the front of the house. Presently came three elderly men; who seated themselves between us and it, and began a speech, which I understood to be a prayer, it being wholly directed to the house. This lasted about ten minutes; and then the priests, for such I took them to be, came and sat down along with us, when we made them presents of such things as were about us. Having then made signs to them that we wanted to view the premises, my friend Attago immediately got up, and going with us, without showing the least backwardness, gave us full liberty to examine every part of it.

"In the front were two stone steps leading to the top of the wall; from this the ascent to the house was easy, round

[1] Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, vol. i. (London, 1904) pp. 249 *sqq*.

which was a fine gravel walk. The house was built, in all respects, like to their common dwelling-houses ; that is, with posts and rafters ; and covered with palm thatch. The eaves came down within about three feet of the ground, which space was filled up with strong matting made of palm leaves, as a wall. The floor of the house was laid with fine gravel ; except in the middle, where there was an oblong square of blue pebbles, raised about six inches higher than the floor. At one corner of the house stood an image rudely carved in wood, and on one side lay another ; each about two feet in length. I, who had no intention to offend either them or their gods, did not so much as touch them, but asked Attago, as well as I could, if they were *Eatuas*, or gods. Whether he understood me or no, I cannot say ; but he immediately turned them over and over, in as rough a manner as he would have done any other log of wood, which convinced me that they were not there as representatives of the Divinity. I was curious to know if the dead were interred there, and asked Attago several questions relative thereto ; but I was not sure that he understood me ; at least I did not understand the answers he made, well enough to satisfy my inquiries. For the reader must know, that at our first coming among these people, we hardly could understand a word they said. Even my Otaheitean youth, and the man on board the *Adventure*, were equally at a loss : but more of this by and by. Before we quitted the house we thought it necessary to make an offering at the altar. Accordingly we laid down upon the blue pebbles, some medals, nails, and several other things ; which we had no sooner done than my friend Attago took them up, and put them in his pocket. The stones with which the walls were made that inclosed this mount, were some of them nine or ten feet by four, and about six inches thick. It is difficult to conceive how they can cut such stones out of the coral rocks.

"This mount stood in a kind of grove open only on the side which fronted the high road, and the green on which the people were seated. At this green or open place, was a junction of five roads, two or three of which appeared to be very public ones. The groves were composed of several sorts of trees. Among others was the *Etoa* tree, as it is

called at Otaheite, of which are made clubs, etc., and a kind of low palm, which is very common in the northern parts of New Holland.

"After we had done examining this place of worship, which in their language is called *a-fiat-tou-ca*, we desired to return." [1]

A little farther on, still speaking of his first visit to Tonga, Captain Cook observes: "So little do we know of their religion, that I hardly dare mention it. The buildings called *afiatoucas*, before mentioned, are undoubtedly set apart for this purpose. Some of our gentlemen were of opinion, that they were merely burying-places. I can only say, from my own knowledge, that they are places to which particular persons directed set speeches, which I understood to be prayers, as hath been already related. Joining my opinion with that of others, I was inclined to think that they are set apart to be both temples and burying-places, as at Otaheite, or even in Europe. But I have no idea of the images being idols; not only from what I saw myself, but from Mr. Wales's informing me that they set one of them up, for him and others to shoot at." [2]

Thus Captain Cook and his party were divided in opinion as to whether the house on the mound, within its walled enclosure built of great stones, was a temple or a tomb. Captain Cook himself called it simply a "house of worship" and a "place of worship," but he inclined to the view that it was both a temple and a burying-place, and in this opinion he was probably right. The native name which he applied to it, *afiatouca*, means a burial-place; for it is doubtless equivalent to *fytoca*, a word which Mariner explains to mean "a burying-place, including the grave, the mount in which it is sunk, and a sort of shed over it." [3] Moreover, the oblong square of blue pebbles, which Captain Cook observed on the floor of the house on the mound, and which he regarded as

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 182-184.

[2] Captain James Cook, *op. cit.* iii. 206.

[3] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 144, note *. However, in another passage (i. 392, note *) Mariner tells us that, strictly speaking, the word *fytoca* applied only to the mound with the grave in it, and not to the house upon the mound; for there were several *fytocas* that had no houses on them. For other mentions of *fytocas* and notices of them by Mariner, see *op. cit.* i. pp. 386, note *, 387, 388, 392, 393, 394, 395, 402, ii. 214-218.

the altar, speaks also in favour of the house being a tomb; for Mariner has described how the mourners brought white and black pebbles to the house which stood over the grave of King Finow, and how they "strewed the inside of the house with the white ones, and also the outside about the *fytoca*, as a decoration to it: the black pebbles they strewed only upon those white ones, which covered the ground directly over the body, to about the length and breadth of a man, in the form of a very eccentric ellipse. After this, the house over the *fytoca*," continues Mariner, "was closed up at both ends with a reed fencing, reaching from the eaves to the ground, and, at the front and back, with a sort of basket-work, made of the young branches of the cocoa-nut tree, split and interwoven in a very curious and ornamental way, to remain till the next burial, when they are to be taken down, and, after the conclusion of the ceremony, new ones are to be put up in like manner."[1] This description of the house over King Finow's grave agrees so closely with Captain Cook's description of the house in the *afiatouca*, that we may with much probability regard the latter as a tomb, and suppose that the "oblong square of blue pebbles," which Cook regarded as an altar and on which he laid down his offering, marked the place of the body in the grave: it was at once an altar and a tombstone.

On his second and more prolonged visit to the Tonga islands, Captain Cook expressed, with more confidence, his opinion that the *fiatookas*, as he calls them, were at once burial-grounds and places of worship. Thus he says: "Their *morais* or *fiatookas* (for they are called by both names, but mostly by the latter), are, as at Otaheite, and many other parts of the world, burying-grounds and places of worship; though some of them seemed to be only appropriated to the first purpose; but these were small, and, in every other respect, inferior to the others."[2] Again, in another passage he describes one of the more stately of these temple-tombs. He says: "Some of us, accompanied by a few of the king's attendants, and Omai as our interpreter, walked out to take

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 402. A little farther on (p. 424, note *) Mariner remarks that "mourners were accustomed to smooth the graves of their departed friends, and cover them with black and white pebbles."

[2] Captain Cook, *Voyages*, v. 424.

a view of a *fiatooka*, or burying-place, which we had observed to be almost close by the house, and was much more extensive, and seemingly of more consequence, than any we had seen at the other islands. We were told, that it belonged to the king. It consisted of three pretty large houses, situated upon a rising ground, or rather just by the brink of it, with a small one, at some distance, all ranged longitudinally. The middle house of the three first, was by much the largest, and placed in a square, twenty-four paces by twenty-eight, raised about three feet. The other houses were placed on little mounts, raised artificially to the same height. The floors of these houses, as also the tops of the mounts round them, were covered with loose, fine pebbles, and the whole was inclosed by large flat stones of hard coral rock, properly hewn, placed on their edges; one of which stones measured twelve feet in length, two in breadth, and above one in thickness. One of the houses, contrary to what we had seen before, was open on one side; and within it were two rude, wooden busts of men; one near the entrance, and the other farther in. On inquiring of the natives, who had followed us to the ground, but durst not enter here, What these images were intended for? they made us as sensible as we could wish, that they were merely memorials of some chiefs who had been buried there, and not the representations of any deity. Such monuments, it should seem, are seldom raised; for these had probably been erected several ages ago. We were told, that the dead had been buried in each of these houses; but no marks of this appeared. In one of them, was the carved head of an Otaheite canoe, which had been driven ashore on their coast, and deposited here. At the foot of the rising ground was a large area, or grass-plot, with different trees planted about it; amongst which were several of those called *etoa*, very large. These, as they resemble the cypresses, had a fine effect in such a place. There was also a row of low palms near one of the houses, and behind it a ditch, in which lay a great number of old baskets."[1]

Between the departure of Cook and the arrival of Mariner the first Protestant missionaries were fortunate

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 342 *sq.*

enough to witness the burial of a king of Tonga, by name Moomōoe. Their description of it and of the royal tomb entirely bears out the observations and conclusions of Captain Cook. The *fiatooka* or burial-ground, they tell us, "is situated on a spot of ground about four acres. A mount rises with a gentle slope about seven feet, and is about one hundred and twenty yards in circumference at the base; upon the top stands a house neatly made, which is about thirty feet long, and half that in width. The roof is thatched, and the sides and ends left open. In the middle of this house is the grave, the sides, ends, and bottom of which are of coral stone, with a cover of the same: the floor of the house is of small stones. The *etoa* and other trees grow round the *fiatooka*."[1] Into this grave, or rather stone vault, the missionaries saw the king's body lowered. The stone which covered the vault was eight feet long, four feet broad, and one foot thick. This massive stone was first raised and held in suspense by means of two great ropes, the ends of which were wound round two strong piles driven into the ground at the end of the house. The ropes were held by about two hundred men, who, when the king's body had been deposited in the grave, slowly lowered the great stone and covered the vault.[2] Some years later Mariner witnessed the funeral of another king of Tonga, Finow the First; and he similarly describes how the tomb was a large stone vault, sunk about ten feet deep in the ground, the covering stone of which was hoisted by the main strength of a hundred and fifty or two hundred men pulling at the two ends of a rope; when the bodies of the king and his daughter had been laid side by side in the vault the massive stone was lowered by the men with a great shout.[3] The number of the men required to raise and lower these great stones gives us some idea of their weight.

Thus far we have been dealing only with the tombs of the civil kings of Tonga. But far more stately and massive are the tombs of the sacred kings or pontiffs, the

[1] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 240 *sq.*

[2] Captain James Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 244.

[3] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 387 *sq.*

Tooitongas, which still exist and still excite the curiosity and admiration of European observers. The Tongan name for these tombs is *langi*, which properly means "sky," also "a band of singers"; but there appears to be no connexion between these different meanings of the word.[1] The tombs are situated in Tongataboo, not far from Mooa, the old capital of the island. They stand near the south-eastern shore of the lagoon, which, under the name of the Mooa Inlet, penetrates deeply into the northern side of Tongataboo. Beginning at the northern outskirts of the village of Labaha, they stretch inland for more than half a mile into the forest.[2] They are of various constructions and shapes. Some consist of a square enclosure, on the level of the ground, the boundary walls being formed of large stones; while at each corner of the square two high stones, rising above the wall, are placed upright at right angles to each other and in a line with their respective sides.[3] But apparently the more usual and characteristic type of tomb has the form of a truncated pyramid or oblong platform raised in a series of steps or terraces, which are built of massive blocks of coral. The number of steps or terraces seems to vary from one to four according to the height of the monument.[4] It is much to be regretted that no one has yet counted and mapped out these tombs and recorded the names of their royal or divine occupants, so far as they are remembered; but a trace of the religious awe which once invested this hallowed ground still avails to keep it inviolate. A proposal which Sir Basil Thomson made to clear away the forest and preserve the tombs was very coldly received; in the eyes of the natives, professing Christians as they are, it probably savoured of sacrilege. The ancient custom was to clear the ground about every

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 213 *sq.*

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 86.

[3] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 283 *sq.*

[4] The tomb described and illustrated by the first missionaries had four massive and lofty steps, each of them five and a half feet broad and four feet or three feet nine inches high. See Captain James Wilson, *l.c.*, with the plate facing p. 284. One such tomb, rising in four tiers, is ascribed traditionally to a female Tooitonga, whose name has been forgotten. See (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 88 n.[2].

new tomb, and after the interment to suffer the tropical undergrowth to swallow it up for ever. Nowadays no holy pontiffs are borne to their last resting-place in these hallowed shades; so the forest is never cleared, and nature is left free to run wild. In consequence the tombs are so overgrown and overshadowed that it is difficult to photograph them in the gloomy and tangled thicket. Great *ifi* trees[1] overhang them: banyan-trees have sprouted on the terraces and thrust their roots into every crevice, mantling the stones with a lacework of tendrils, which year by year rend huge blocks asunder, until the original form of the terrace is almost obliterated. Sir Basil Thomson followed the chain of tombs for about half a mile, but on each occasion his guides told him that there were other smaller tombs farther inland. The tombs increase in size and in importance as they near the shore of the lagoon, and to seven or eight of the larger ones the names of the occupants can be assigned; but the names of the sacred chiefs who sleep in the smaller tombs inland are quite forgotten. Some of them are mere enclosures of stones, not squared, but taken haphazard from the reef.[2]

The tombs were built in the lifetime of the sacred chiefs who were to lie in them, and their size accordingly affords a certain measure of the power and influence of the great men interred in them. Among the largest is the tomb which goes by the name of Telea, though it is said to contain no body, Telea himself being buried in the tomb next to it. We are told that, dissatisfied with the first sepulchre that was built for him, he replaced it by the other, which is also of great size. The most modern of the tombs is that of Laufilitonga, the last to bear the title of Tooitonga. He died a Christian about 1840 and was buried in the tomb of very inferior size which crowns the village cemetery. The most ancient cannot be dated; but

[1] The Tahitian chestnut (*Inocarpus edulis*); see above, p. 74, note [2].

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister* (Edinburgh and London, 1894), pp. 379 *sq.*; *id.* "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 86. According to an earlier authority, the Tongans could name and point out the tombs of no less than thirty Tooitongas. See the letter of Mr. Philip Hervey, quoted in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, Second Series, vol. ii. p. 77.

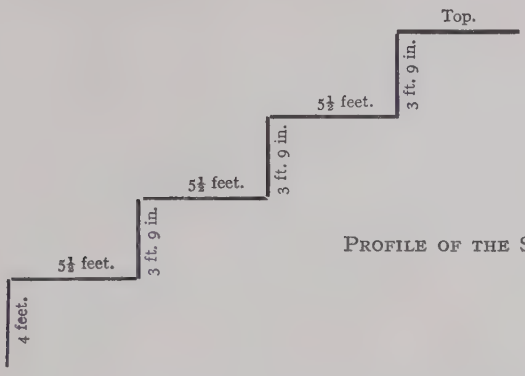
that some are older than A.D. 1535 may be inferred from the tradition that Takalaua, a Tooitonga, was assassinated about that time because he was a tyrant who compelled his people to drag great stones from Liku, at the back of the island, to the burial ground at Mooa; the distance is about a mile and a half.[1]

The first, so far as I know, to see and describe these remarkable tombs were the earliest missionaries to Tonga about the end of the eighteenth century. Speaking of the burial ground at Mooa, where lay interred the divine chiefs whose title was Tooitonga and whose family name was Futtafāihe or Fatafehi, the missionaries observe that "the *fiatookas* are remarkable. There lie the Futtafāihes for many generations, some vast and ruinous, which is the case with the largest; the house on the top of it is fallen, and the area and tomb itself overgrown with wood and weeds."[2] Later on they had the advantage of being conducted over the august cemetery by the Futtafāihe or Tooitonga of the day in person, who gave them some explanations concerning these sepulchres of his ancestors. To quote their description, they say that the tombs "lie ranged in a line eastward from his house, among a grove of trees, and are many in number, and of different constructions: some, in a square form, were not in the least raised above the level of the common ground; a row of large stones formed the sides, and at each corner two high stones were placed upright at right angles to each other, and in a line with their respective sides: others were such as the brethren describe that of Moomōoe to be: and a third sort were built square like the

[1] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 86 *sq.*, 88 n.[2]. As to the legend of the tyrant Takalaua, see *id. Diversions of a Prime Minister*, pp. 294-302.

[2] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 252. As to Futtafāihe, the Tooitonga or divine chief of their time, the missionaries remark (*l.c.*) that "Futtafāihe is very superstitious, and himself esteemed as an *odooa* or god." Here *odooa* is the Polynesian word which is usually spelled *atua*. Mariner tells us (*Tonga Islands*, ii. 76) that the family name of the Tooitonga was Fatafehi, which seems to be only another way of spelling Futtafāihe, the form adopted by the missionaries. Captain Cook similarly gives Futtafāihe as the family name of the sacred kings or Tooitongas, deriving the name "from the God so called, who is probably their tutelary patron, and perhaps their common ancestor." See Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 425.

first; the largest of which was at the base one hundred and fifty-six feet by one hundred and forty; it had four steps



PROFILE OF THE STEPS.

from the bottom to the top, that run quite round the pile: one stone composed the height of each step, a part of it being sunk in the ground; and some of these stones in the wall of the lower are immensely large; one, which I measured, was twenty-four feet by twelve, and two feet thick; these Futtafāihe informed me were brought in double canoes from the island of Lefooga. They are coral stone, and are hewn into a tolerably good shape, both with respect to the straightness of their sides and flatness of their surfaces. They are now so hardened by the weather, that the great difficulty we had in breaking a specimen of one corner made it not easy to conjecture how the labour of hewing them at first had been effected; as, by the marks of antiquity which some of them bear, they must have been built long before Tasman showed the natives an iron tool. Besides the trees which grow on the top and sides of most of them, there are the *etooa*, and a variety of other trees about them; and these, together with the thousands of bats which hang on their branches, all contribute to the awful solemnity of those sepulchral mansions of the ancient chiefs. On our way back Futtafāihe told us that all the *fiatookas* we had seen were built by his ancestors, who also lay interred in them; and as there appeared no reason to doubt the truth of this, it proves that a supreme power in the government of the island must for many generations

have been in the family of the Futtafāihes: for though there were many *fiatookas* in the island, the brethren, who had seen most of them, said they were not to be compared to these for magnitude, either in the pile or the stones which compose them."[1]

Some thirty years later the tombs of the Tooitongas were visited and described by the French explorer, J. Dumont d'Urville. His description is worth quoting. He says: "I directed my steps to the splendid *faï-tokas* of the Fata-Faïs. As these monuments are essentially taboo, in the absence of the Tooi-tonga no one looks after their upkeep, and they are now buried on every side among dark masses of trees and almost impenetrable thickets. Hence we had some difficulty in approaching them, and it was impossible for us to get a single general view of the whole of these structures, which must have a somewhat solemn effect when the ground is properly cleared.

"For the most part these mausoleums have the form of great rectangular spaces surrounded by enormous blocks of stone, of which some are as much as from fifteen to twenty feet long by six or eight broad and two feet thick. The most sumptuous of these monuments have four or five rows of steps, making up a total height of eighteen or twenty feet. The interior is filled up with shingle and fragments of unhewn coral. One of these *faï-tokas*, which I measured, was a hundred and eighty feet long by a hundred and twenty broad. At one of the upper angles I observed a block of considerable size with a deep cutting in it. I was told that it was the seat of the Tooi-tonga-fafine[2]; it was there that

[1] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 283-285. The description is accompanied by an engraved plate, which illustrates the three types of tombs mentioned in the text. In the foreground is the stepped pyramid, a massive and lofty structure, its flat top surmounted by a hut. To the right, in the distance, is seen the square walled enclosure, with high stones standing upright at the corners of the walls, and with a hut enclosed in the middle of the square. In the background appears a mound enclosed by a wall and surmounted by a hut. Thus a hut figures as an essential part in each type of tomb. However, Mariner tells us that "they have several *fytocas* which have no houses on them" (*Tonga Islands*, i. 392 note *).

[2] The Tooi-tonga-fafine (or fefine) was the Tooitonga's sister and ranked above him. Her title means "the lady Tooi-tonga." "Her dignity is very great. She is treated as a kind of divinity. Her rank is too high to allow of her uniting herself in marriage with any mortal: but it is not thought wrong or degrading for her to have a

she sat to preside at the ceremony of the funeral of the Tooi-tonga.

"Some of these edifices were of an oval form, but they were much smaller. Each of them was surmounted by a small hut, which served as an oratory or house for the spirit of the dead; most of them have been destroyed by the lapse of time, and only traces of them are left scattered on the ground.

"The enormous blocks of coral employed in the construction of these monuments have all been brought by sea from Hifo to Mooa. They were got on the shore of the sea at Hifo, were hewn on the spot, and were transported in great canoes; then they were landed at Mooa and drawn on rollers to the place of their destination. These monuments are astonishing evidence of the patience which they must have demanded on the part of these islanders; they were ocular testimony to me of the high degree of civilisation which the natives had reached. Man must have risen to ideas of a much higher order than those of a simple savage before he would take so great pains for the single object of consecrating the memory of his chiefs.

"Such tombs are no longer built in Tongataboo: people content themselves with simple mounds surrounded by a row of posts or even an ordinary palisade. However,

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family, and in case of the birth of a daughter the child becomes the *Tamaha*. This lady rises higher than her mother in rank, and is nearer the gods. Every one approaches her with gifts and homage. Her grandfather will bring his offerings and sit down before her, with all humility, like any of the common people. Sick people come to her for cure" (Miss Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 145, apparently from the information of Mr. John Thomas). Captain Cook learned with surprise that Poulaho, the Tooi-tonga of his time (whom Cook speaks of as the king) acknowledged three women as his superiors. "On our inquiring, who these extraordinary personages were, whom they distinguish by the name and title of *Tammaha*, we were told that the late king, Poulaho's father, had a sister of equal rank, and elder than himself; that she, by a man who came from the island of Feejee, had a son and two daughters; and that these three persons, as well as their mother, rank above Futtafaihe the king. We endeavoured, in vain, to trace the reason of this singular pre-eminence of the *Tammahas*; for we could learn nothing besides this account of their pedigree. The mother and one of the daughters called Tooeela-Kaipa, live at Vavaoo. Latoolibooloo, the son, and the other daughter, whose name is Moungoula-Kaipa, reside at Tongataboo. The latter is the woman who is mentioned to have dined with me on the 21st of June. This gave occasion to our discovering her superiority over the king, who would not eat in her presence, though she made no scruple to do so before him, and received from him the customary obeisance, by touching her foot." See Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 430 *sq.*

Singleton assured me that Finow the Younger had erected two great *faï-tokas* of stone in Vavao, one for the last Tooi-tonga, and one for his father."[1]

The Frenchman, De Sainson, who accompanied Dumont d'Urville on his visit to Tongataboo, has also described the tombs of the Tooitongas at Mooa from personal observation. I will quote his description: "It is in the heart of the forest that the ancient inhabitants of these countries, who idolized their Kings (Tooi-tongas), placed the tombs of that sacred race. These monuments of a more enterprising age still astonish the beholder by their mass and their extent. The *fai-tokas*, as these burial-places are called, are artificial eminences, on the top of which, in the form of a square, are three or four crosses of great granitic blocks arranged as steps, of which each block may be four or five feet high. If there is only a single step on the top of the mound, it is because only a single Tooi-tonga sleeps there in the grave; if the bones of a whole family are deposited in a common tomb, three or four steps, one above the other, mark their union in death. Some of these monuments which contain only a single body are arranged in an oval. I counted more than twelve of these immense structures, and yet we left a great many aside. I counted more than one stone between eight and fifteen feet long; and I conceived a high idea of those men of ancient days who erected over the remains of their kings these imperishable mausoleums, in an island based on coral, where it would be difficult to find a stone of two feet square. I imagined them to be very different from their effeminate descendants, those men of old who went in their canoes more than a hundred and fifty leagues to look for the enormous blocks of which these tombs are built, who cut them without the help of iron, and succeeded, by means unknown, in planting them on these hillocks, where by their own weight they are fixed for ever, like the Druidical monuments of Brittany, which one would say were dropped

[1] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de l'Astrolabe, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1832) pp. 106-108. Singleton was an Englishman, one of the crew of the *Port-au-Prince*, the ship in which Mariner sailed. When Dumont d'Urville visited Tonga, Singleton had lived as a native among the natives for twenty-three years; he was married and had children, and he hoped to end his days in Tongataboo. See J. Dumont d'Urville, *op. cit.* iv. 23 *sq.*

on earth rather by the magic of talismans than by the power of man.

"The present inhabitants of Tonga contemplate with a pious awe the fruit of the labours and patience of their forefathers, without dreaming for a moment of imitating them in their noble enterprises. A distant voyage affrights these degenerate scions of a hardy race, and the great canoes which still survive, sheltered under sheds very skilfully built, are little more than the useless encumbrance of chiefs grown languid in the long peace which has infected the whole people with habits of indolence.

"The most recent tombs consist of a small house enclosed on all sides, built on a rising ground, and shaded by a circle of mimosas, a tree sacred to the dead. Most of the illustrious graves are clustered together at Mafanga, a large village of which the whole territory is sacred on account of the hallowed relics which it contains. Along with the corpse they bury at the depth of a few inches small wooden effigies representing persons of both sexes. I had occasion to unearth a few of these little statues, and I remarked in them an astonishing feeling for artistic design."[1]

Some sixteen years later a Catholic missionary, living among the heathen population of Tongataboo, wrote thus: "Nothing equals the care which they take in the burial of their dead. As soon as a native has breathed his last, the neighbours are informed, and immediately all the women come to weep about the corpse. Here the men never weep. The body is kept thus for a day or two, during which they are busy building a tomb near the dwelling of the deceased's family. The sepulchral house is neat, built on an eminence, surrounded by a pretty fence of choice bamboos; the enclosure is planted with all kinds of odoriferous shrubs, especially evergreens. Finally, the monument is covered by a roof artistically constructed. For the tombs of kings and the greatest chiefs they go to distant islands to find huge stones to crown the grave. I have seen one twenty-four feet long by eight broad and at least eighteen inches thick.

[1] "Extrait du Journal de M. de Sainson," in J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de l'Astrolabe, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1832) pp. 361 *sq.*

One of these tombs was built by the natives of Wallis Island, who brought the enormous blocks in immense canoes. It is wonderful for these peoples."[1]

Captain Erskine, who visited Tongataboo in 1849, says that "near the landing-place at the village of Holobeka, off which we were lying, we saw overshadowed with trees, one of the *faitokas*, or old burial-places of the country, which, although no longer 'tabu,' are still in some cases used as places of sepulture, and very carefully kept. This one was an oblong square platform a few feet high, surrounded by a stone wall, the interior being beautifully paved with coloured corals and gravel; the house or temple, which Captain Cook and others describe as occupying the centre, having been, I suppose, removed. I saw but one other of these monuments during our stay among the islands, the largest of which stands on several rows of steps, as described by all former visitors."[2]

Thomas West, who lived as a missionary in the Tongan islands from 1846 to 1855, tells us that "chiefs were usually interred in tombs, constructed of blocks of sandstone, cut from suitable localities by the seashore, where, at a little depth from the surface, layers of hard and durable sandstone are found, even on many of the coralline islands. In several of the ancient burial-places, similar stones, arranged in terraces, surround the whole enclosure. Some of these are of immense size, and seem to indicate the possession, on the part of former inhabitants, either of greater energy than the present race, or of better tools and appliances. The burial-places of the Tonguese are always surrounded by the most imposing foliage of the tropics, and placed in sequestered spots. A mound of earth is raised, of dimensions varying with the necessities of the place; and, whenever a grave is opened within the limits of this mound, it is always filled up with beautiful white sand, and never contains more than one body. No particle of clay or earthy mould is allowed to touch the remains of the dead. The sand is brought in baskets by the chief

[1] Jérôme Grange, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) pp. 12 *sq.*

[2] J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London, 1853), p. 130.

mourners, who sometimes sail or journey many miles to procure it; and each person pours the contents into the grave until it is sufficiently filled up. The top of the grave is, afterwards, carefully tended and decorated with black pebbles and red coral, arranged in various devices, which have a very pretty effect. Small houses are also placed over the tombs of the chiefs and gentry."[1]

In more recent years the tombs of the Tooitongas at Mooa have been visited by Sir Basil Thomson, who has described and discussed them.[2] From an anonymous pamphlet called *The Wairarapa Wilderness*, written by the passengers of the s.s. *Wairarapa* and published in 1884, Sir Basil Thomson quotes a passage containing a description of the tombs, with measurements which, he tells us, are accurate as far as they go. From it I will extract a few particulars. The writers inform us that the tombs are built of blocks of coral which vary in length and thickness; some of the largest they found to be from fifteen to eighteen feet long and from one and a half to two feet thick. The largest measured by them is twenty-two feet long and two feet thick and stands between seven and eight feet above the ground. This great stone, now split in two, is at the middle of the lowest step of one of the pyramidal tombs. The height of the steps varies much in the different pyramids; one step was found to be four feet high. The breadth of each step is three feet or more: it has been carefully levelled and covered with coral gravel. The stones fit very closely and are very regular at top and bottom throughout the tiers. The corners of one pyramid observed by the writers are formed of huge rectangular stones, which seem to have been put in position before they were finally faced. On the upper surface of the largest stone is a deep hollow about the size and shape of a large chestnut mortar. Sir Basil Thomson, who has examined this hollow, believes it to be a natural cavity which has been artificially smoothed by a workman. He suggests that it may have been lined with leaves and used as a bowl for brewing kava at the funeral

[1] Thomas West, *Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia* (London, 1865), pp. 268 *sq.*

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, pp. 379 *sq.*; *id.* "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 86-88.

ceremonies. On one mound the writers of the pamphlet remarked a large flat stone, some five and a half feet square; and in several of the tombs they noticed huge slabs of volcanic stone placed indiscriminately side by side with blocks of coral. The writers measured the bases of three of the tombs and found them to be about two chains (one hundred and thirty-two feet) long by a chain and a half (ninety-nine feet) broad; the base of a fourth was even larger.[1]

Surveying these various accounts of the tombs of the Tooitongas or sacred chiefs, we may perhaps conclude that, while the type of tomb varied in different cases, the most characteristic, and certainly the most remarkable, type was that of a stepped or terraced pyramid built of such large blocks of stone as to merit the name of megalithic monuments. So far as I have observed in the accounts given of them, this type of tomb was reserved exclusively for the sacred chiefs, the Tooitongas, whom the Tongans regarded as divine and as direct descendants of the gods. The civil kings, so far as appears, were not buried in these massive pyramids, but merely in stone vaults sunk in the summits of grassy mounds.

It is natural, with Sir Basil Thomson,[2] to compare the pyramids of the Tooitongas with the similar structures called *morais* or *marais* which are found in Tahiti and the Marquesas islands. Indeed, the very name *morai* was sometimes applied to them by the Tongans themselves, though more usually they called them *fiatookas*, which was simply the common word for burying-ground.[3] In Tahiti and the Marquesas islands these *marais* were in like manner truncated pyramids, rising in a series of steps or tiers, built of stones, some of which were large, but apparently not so large as in the

[1] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 87 *sq.*

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 379.

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 424. Elsewhere (v. 364) he speaks of "a *morai* or *fiatooka*"; and shortly afterwards, referring to the same structure, he mentions it as "this *morai*, or what I may as well call temple" (p. 365). As to the equivalence of the words *morai* and *marai* (*marae*), see J. A. Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Îles du Grand Océan* (Paris, 1837), i. 466; and as to the significance of the word in its various dialectical forms, see E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 213, *s.v.* "malae."

corresponding Tongan edifices; for in describing one of the largest of the Tahitian *morais* or *marais* Cook mentions only one stone measuring as much as four feet seven inches in length by two feet four in breadth, though he found several three and a half feet long by two and a half feet broad. These dimensions can hardly compare with the size of the blocks in the tombs of the Tooitongas, some of which, as we have seen, measure fifteen, eighteen, and even twenty-two or twenty-four feet in length by eight or twelve feet in height. These Tahitian and Marquesan pyramids are commonly described as temples, and justly so, because the gods were worshipped there and human sacrifices were offered on them.[1] But they were also, like the similar structures in Tonga, used in certain cases for the burial of the dead, or at all events for the preservation of their embalmed bodies. Captain Cook seems even to have regarded the Tahitian *morais* primarily as burying-grounds and only secondarily as places of worship.[2] In the island of Huahine, one of the Society Islands, the sovereign chiefs were buried in a *marai*, where they lay, we are told, in more than Oriental state.[3] William Ellis, one of our best authorities on the religion of the Tahitians, tells us that "the family, district, or royal *maraes* were the general depositories of the bones of the departed, whose bodies had been embalmed, and whose

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, i. 157 *sqq.*; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World* (London, 1788), pp. 543 *sqq.*; Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 207 *sqq.*; David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean* (New York, 1822), ii. 38 *sq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1831), i. 240-248, 265 *sqq.*, 271, 274, 529 *sq.*, ii. 13 *sq.*, 38 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, Second Edition (London, 1832-1836), i. 340, 405; J. A. Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Îles du Grand Océan*, i. 466-470; G. H. von Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt* (Frankfurt am Mayn, 1812), i. 115, 134; H. Melville, *Typee* (London, N.D.), pp. 166-169 (*Everyman's Library*); Matthias G***, *Lettres sur les Îles Marquises* (Paris, 1843), pp. 54 *sq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans* (Leipzig, 1875-1876), i. 49, ii. 180, 183 *sq.*; G. Gerland, in Th. Waitz, *Anthropologie*, vi. (Leipzig, 1872) pp. 376 *sqq.*

[2] Capt. James Cook, *Voyages*, i. 157 *sq.*, "Their name for such burying-grounds, which are also places of worship, is *Morai*." Compare *id.*, i. 217, 219, 220, 224, vi. 37, 41; J. Turnbull, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1813), p. 151, "the *morais*, which serve the double purpose of places of worship and receptacles for the dead." Compare J. R. Forster, *Observations*, p. 545, "To ornament the *marais* and to honour by it the gods and the decayed buried there, the inhabitants plant several sorts of trees near them."

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 271.

skulls were sometimes preserved in the dwelling of the survivors. The *marae* or temple being sacred, and the bodies being under the guardianship of the gods, were in general considered secure when deposited there. This was not, however, always the case; and in times of war, the victors sometimes not only despoiled the temples of the vanquished, and bore away their idol, but robbed the sacred enclosure of the bones of celebrated individuals."[1] Moerenhout, another good authority on the Tahitian religion, informs us that the *marais* which belonged to individuals often served as cemeteries and were only the more respected on that account; but he says that in the public *marais* almost the only persons buried were the human victims offered in sacrifice, and sometimes the priests, who were laid face downwards in the grave, for the curious reason that otherwise the gaze of the dead men would blight the trees and cause the fruit to fall to the ground.[2]

In the Marquesas islands the *morais* appear to have been also used occasionally or even regularly as burial-places. Langsdorff, one of our earliest authorities on these islands, speaks of a *morai* simply as a place of burial.[3] He tells us that the mummified bodies of the dead were deposited on scaffolds in the *morai* or family burial-place, and that the people of neighbouring but hostile districts used to try to steal each other's dead from the *morais*, and deemed it a great triumph when they succeeded in the attempt. To defeat such attempts, when the inhabitants of a district expected to be attacked in force by their enemies, they were wont to remove their dead from the *morai* and bury them in the neighbourhood.[4] Again, in their monograph on the Marquesas islands, the French writers Vincendon-Dumoulin and Desgraz recognise only the mortuary aspect of the *morais*. They say: "The *morais*, funeral monuments where

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 405. Elsewhere (p. 401), speaking of the Tahitian burial customs, Ellis observes that "the skull was carefully kept in the family, while the other bones, etc., were buried within the precincts of the family temple."

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 470. As to the Tahitian custom of burying the dead in the *marais*, see also C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans*, ii. 183 *sq.*, according to whom only the bodies of persons of high rank were interred in these sanctuaries.

[3] G. H. von Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 115.

[4] G. H. von Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 134.

the bodies are deposited, are set up on a platform of stone, which is the base of all Nukahivan constructions. They are to be found scattered in the whole extent of the valleys; no particular condition seems to be required in the choice of the site. Near the shore of Taïohae is the *morai* which contains the remains of a brother of the *atepeïou Patini*, an uncle of Moana, who died some years ago, as they tell us."[1]

Thus to some extent, in function as well as in form, these pyramidical temples of Tahiti and the Marquesas islands corresponded to the megalithic monuments of the Tooitongas or sacred chiefs of Tonga; in fact, they were mausoleums as well as temples. We are not at liberty to assume, with one authority on the Polynesians, that they were mausoleums first and foremost, and that they only developed into temples at a later time.[2] It is possible, on the contrary, that from the outset they were temples dedicated to the worship of the high gods, and that the custom of depositing the dead in them was a later practice adopted for the sake of the protection which these holy places might be expected to afford against the efforts of enemies to carry off and desecrate the remains of the departed. Dr. Rivers propounded a theory that the custom of building these megalithic monuments in the form of pyramids was introduced into the Pacific by a people who brought with them a secret worship of the sun, and he apparently inclined to regard the monuments themselves as at least associated with that worship.[3] The theory can hardly apply to the megalithic monuments of the Tooitongas in Tongataboo; for the evidence which I have adduced seems to render it certain that these monuments were erected primarily as tombs to receive the bodies of the sacred chiefs. It is true that these tombs enjoyed a sacred character and were the scene of worship which justly entitles them to rank as temples; but so far as they were temples, they were devoted to the worship, not of the sun, but of the dead.

Thus our enquiry into the meaning and origin of these

[1] Vincendon - Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Îles Marquises ou Nouka-hiva* (Paris, 1843), p. 253.

[2] C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans*, ii. 180.

[3] W. H. R. Rivers, "Sun-cult and Megaliths in Oceania," *American Anthropologist*, N.S. xvii. (1915) pp. 431 *sqq.*

interesting monuments entirely confirms the view of the shrewd and observant Captain Cook that the *fiatookas*, as the Tongans called them, were both places of burial and places of worship.

Finally, the evidence which I have cited appears to render it highly probable that these imposing monuments were built, not by a prehistoric people, predecessors of the Tongans in the islands, but by the Tongans themselves; for not only do the people affirm that the tombs were erected by their ancestors, but they have definite traditions of some of the chiefs who built them, and are buried in them; and they still profess to remember some of the islands from which the huge stones were brought to Tongataboo in great double canoes.

That the graves of the great chiefs were, like temples, regarded by the people with religious reverence appears plainly from a statement of Mariner. He tells us that a place called Mafanga, in the western part of Tongataboo, being a piece of land about half a mile square, was consecrated ground. "In this spot," he says, "are the graves where the greatest chiefs from time immemorial have been buried, and the place is therefore considered sacred; it would be a sacrilege to fight here, and nobody can be prevented from landing: if the most inveterate enemies meet upon this ground, they must look upon each other as friends, under penalty of the displeasure of the gods, and consequently an untimely death, or some great misfortune. There are several of these consecrated places on different islands."[1] Thus the reverence paid to the tombs of the chiefs was like the reverence paid to the consecrated houses and enclosures of the gods; we have already seen what a sacrilege it was deemed to fight or to pursue an enemy within the consecrated enclosure of a god,[2] and we now learn that it was equally a sacrilege to fight within the ground that was hallowed by the graves of the chiefs.

Mariner has described for us the worship paid by the king and his chiefs to one of the sacred graves at Mafanga. One morning Finow the king, accompanied by several of his chiefs and their ministers (the *mataboole*s), landed at

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 88.

[2] Above, pp. 74 *sqq.*

Mafanga and immediately proceeded to his father's grave to perform a ceremony called *toogi*. Mariner attended the party and witnessed the ceremony. All who went to participate in it assumed the attire of mourners or suppliants, that is, they wore mats instead of their usual dress and they had wreaths, made of the leaves of the *ifi* tree, round their necks. They sat down before the grave, and the king and all of them beat their cheeks with their fists for about half a minute without speaking a word. One of the principal ministers (*mataboole*s) then addressed the spirit of the king's father to the following effect: "Behold the man (meaning Finow, the king) who has come to Tonga to fight his enemies. Be pleased with him, and grant him thy protection. He comes to battle, hoping he is not doing wrong. He has always held Tooitonga in the highest respect, and has attended to all religious ceremonies with exactness." One of the attendants then went to the king and received from him a piece of kava root, which he laid down on the raised mount before the burial-place (*fytoka*). Several others, who had pieces of kava root in their bosoms, went up to the grave in like manner and deposited them there.[1]

Thus the king prayed to the spirit of his dead father at his grave and made an offering at the tomb. What more could he do to a god at his temple? And in general we are told that when a great blessing was desired, or a serious evil deprecated, if the people wished to enjoy health or beget children, to be successful at sea, or victorious in war, they would go to the burial grounds of their great chiefs, clean them up thoroughly, sprinkle the floor with sand, and lay down their offerings.[2] When Finow the king was dying, his friends carried him on a bier, not only to the temples of the great gods Tali-y-Toobo and Tooi-fooa-Bolotoo, where prayers for his recovery were offered; they bore him also to the grave of a chieftainess and invoked her spirit in like manner to pity and spare the expiring monarch.[3] Apparently they thought that the ghost of the chieftainess was quite as able as the great gods to heal the sick and restore the dying.

But on no occasion, perhaps, was the assimilation of dead

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 88 *sq.*

[2] Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands*, p. 127.

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 367.

men to gods so conspicuous as at the annual offering of first-fruits, which seems to have been the most impressive of all the yearly rites observed by the Tongans. The ceremony was observed once a year just before the yams in general had arrived at a state of maturity; the yams offered at it were of a kind which admitted of being planted sooner than the others, and which consequently, ripening earlier, were the first-fruits of the yam season. The object of the offering was to ensure the protection of the gods, that their favour might be extended to the welfare of the nation generally, and in particular to the productions of the earth, of which in Tonga yams are the most important. At this solemn ceremony the new yams, slung on poles, were brought from distant islands, carried in procession to the grave of the late Tooitonga, and deposited in front of it, their bearers sitting down beside them. Thereupon one of the ministers (*matabooles*) of the living Tooitonga arose, advanced, and sat down before the grave, a little in front of the men who had brought the yams. Next he addressed the gods generally, and afterwards particularly, mentioning the late Tooitonga and the names of several others. In doing so he returned thanks for their divine bounty in favouring the land with the prospect of a good harvest, and prayed that their beneficence might be continued in future. In this harvest thanksgiving the spirit of the dead Tooitonga seems to have ranked on an equality with the original or superhuman gods; indeed, in a sense he took precedence of them, since the offerings were presented at his grave. The first-fruits, we are told, were offered to the gods in the person of the divine chief Tooitonga.[1]

On the whole we may conclude that, however sharp a distinction was drawn in theory between the old gods, who had always been gods, and the new gods, who had once been men, the line which divided them in practice was wavering and blurred. The dead men and women were fast rising, if they had not already risen, to an equality with the ancient deities. We may even surmise that some of these old gods

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 196-202, compare p. 78. The ceremony was also witnessed, though not understood, by Captain Cook (*Voyages*, v. 363 *sqq.*) and by the first English missionaries (Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 264 *sq.*).

themselves were human beings, whose original humanity was forgotten.

The tombs of the kings and sacred chiefs may be described as megalithic monuments in so far as immense stones were often employed in the construction either of the enclosing walls or of the high steps which led up to the summit of the mound where the grave was dug. It is possible, and indeed probable, that great stones were similarly employed as ornaments or accessories of the consecrated houses or temples of the primary gods, but of such an employment I have met with no express notice among our authorities. So far as their descriptions allow us to judge, these megalithic monuments of the Tongans were purely sepulchral in character; they were dedicated only to the worship of the dead. But there exists at least one other remarkable megalithic monument in these islands of which the original meaning is quite uncertain, and of which consequently we cannot confidently say that it was erected for the sake of honouring or propitiating the spirits of the departed. The monument in question is situated near the eastern extremity of Tongataboo, at a distance of three or four hundred yards from the beach and facing towards the island of Eua. The land on which it stands was the private property of the Tooitongas, whose megalithic tombs are situated some eight or nine miles away to the west. In the intervening country, which is perfectly flat and partly covered with forest, partly under cultivation, there are said to be no other monuments or ruins. It is remarkable that this imposing monument, which naturally impresses the observer by its resemblance to the trilithons or gate-like structures of Stonehenge, should have apparently escaped the observation of Europeans down to the middle of the nineteenth century. It is not mentioned by Cook and Mariner, nor even by those who, like the first missionaries and Dumont d'Urville, described in some detail the tombs of the Tooitongas not many miles off. Perhaps the solitariness of the surrounding country may partly account for their ignorance and silence; for there are said to be few inhabitants in this part of the island and none at all in the immediate neighbourhood of the monument. It seems to have been first discovered by Mr. Philip Hervey of Sydney

in 1850 or 1851, but his description of it was not published for some ten years. In August 1852 it was seen by Dr. Charles Forbes, Surgeon of H.M.S. *Calliope*, and his description of it was published by the Society of Antiquaries of London in the following year. In 1865 it was seen and briefly described by Mr. Foljambe of H.M.S. *Curaçoa*. Some twenty years later the passengers of the s.s. *Wairarapa*, on a yachting cruise from New Zealand, visited the spot and published an account of the structure. Still later Sir Basil Thomson examined the monument and discussed its history.[1]

The monument in question is a structure of the type known as a trilithon; that is, it is composed of three large stones, of which two stand upright, while the third rests horizontally on their tops. All three stones are monoliths of hardened coral, rough and much weathered on the surface, and precisely similar to the coral of the neighbouring reefs. Indeed, about halfway between the monument and the beach the coral rock is exposed in a hollow, from which it seems probable that the great blocks were hewn and brought to their present situation. The statement of Mr. Brenchley, that the stone of which the monument consists is not to be found elsewhere on the island, is erroneous. The uprights are quadrangular monoliths neatly squared. No measurements of the stones appear to be on record, but the two uprights

[1] See the letter of Dr. Charles Forbes, in *Archaeologia, or Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Antiquity*, xxxv. (London, 1853) p. 496 (with a woodcut); *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London* [First Series], iii. 19; *id.* Second Series, i. 287; letter of Philip Hervey, quoted by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, Second Series, ii. 75-77; Julius L. Brenchley, *Jottings during the Cruise of H.M.S. "Curaçoa" among the South Sea Islands in 1865* (London, 1873), p. 132 (with a woodcut); (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister* (Edinburgh and London, 1894), pp. 380-382 (with a woodcut on p. 393); *id.* "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 81-84 (with a photograph). Views of the monument, taken apparently from photographs, have also been published by Dr. F. H. H. Guillemard (*Australasia*, vol. ii. London, 1894, p. 501), Dr. George Brown (*Melanesians and Polynesians*, London, 1910, plate facing p. 410), and by Mr. S. Percy Smith (*Hawaiki*, Third Edition, Christchurch, N.Z., 1910, pp. 157 *sq.*). Dr. W. H. R. Rivers spoke as if there were several trilithons in Tongataboo (*History of Melanesian Society*, ii. 430 *sq.*; *id.* "Sun-cult and Megaliths in Oceania," *American Anthropologist*, N.S. xvii., 1915, p. 444); but in this he seems to have been mistaken. So far as I can gather, there is only one of these remarkable monuments in Tongataboo or indeed in the whole of the Pacific.

are variously estimated to measure from fourteen to sixteen feet in height; their breadth or depth from front to back is variously given as from eight to ten or even twelve feet; but they seem to taper somewhat upwards, for the estimate which assigns twelve feet for the depth of the uprights at their base, mentions seven feet or probably more as their breadth at the top. The thickness of the uprights seems to be four feet. The space between them is variously stated at ten and twelve feet. The cross-stone, which rests on the two uprights, is reported to measure twenty-four feet in length, by four or five feet in depth, and two feet in thickness. Each of the uprights is estimated by Sir Basil Thomson to weigh not less than fifty tons. The tops of both are deeply mortised to receive the cross-stone, the ends of which are sunk into them instead of being laid flat on the top. The cross-stone lies east and west, so that the opening between the uprights faces north and south. On the upper surface of the cross-stone, and at about the middle of it, is a cup-like hollow, very carefully cut, about the size of a coco-nut shell. A large bowl of the same material is said to have formerly stood on the cross-stone, but the statement is not made by an eyewitness and is probably mistaken.[1]

The name which the natives give to this megalithic monument is *Haamonga* or *Ho ha Mo-nga Maui*, which is said to mean "Maui's burden." The name is explained by a story that the god or hero Maui brought the massive stones in a gigantic canoe from Uea (Wallis Island), where the great

[1] For the authorities, see the preceding note. The measurements, to some extent discrepant, are given by Dr. Charles Forbes, Mr. Philip Hervey, and the passengers of s.s. *Wairarapa*, as reported by Sir Basil Thomson *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. 82 *sq.*), who had unfortunately mislaid his own notes containing the measurements. The statement that the monument was surmounted by a large bowl is made by Mr. Brenchley, in whose sketch of the structure the bowl figures. But Mr. Brenchley did not himself see the monument, and nobody else appears to have seen the bowl. I suspect that the report of the bowl may have originated in a hasty reading of Mr. Hervey's statement that "on the centre of it [the cross-stone] a small cava bowl is scooped out," though in Mr. Brenchley's account the bowl has seemingly increased in size. Similarly in his report the height of the uprights has grown to about thirty feet, which appears to be just double of their real size. Perhaps Mr. Brenchley's erroneous allegation as to the material of the monument similarly originated in a misunderstanding of Mr. Hervey's statement that "the material is the coral rock, or coral rag which are formed of stone brought from Wallis's Island."

holes in the rock from which he quarried them may still be seen. From the canoe he bore them on his back to the spot where they now stand.[1] This story can hardly be thought to throw much light on the origin of the monument; for the natives are in the habit of referring the marvels which they do not understand to the action of the god or hero Maui, just as the ancient Greeks fathered many natural wonders on the deified hero Hercules.[2] But from Mateialona, Governor of Haapai and cousin of the King of Tonga, Sir Basil Thomson obtained a tradition of the origin of the stones which is at least free from the miraculous element and connects the monument with Tongan history. The account runs thus: "Concerning the Haamonga of Maui, they say forsooth that a Tui Tonga (the sacred line of chiefs), named Tui-ta-tui, erected it, and that he was so named because it was a time of assassination.[3] And they say that he had it built for him to sit upon during the Faikava (ceremony of brewing kava), when the people sat round him in a circle, and that the king so dreaded assassination that he had this lordly seat built for himself that he might sit out of the reach of his people. And this, they say, is the origin of the present custom of the Faikava, it being now forbidden for any one to sit behind the king." At such wassails the presiding chief sits at the apex of an oval. To this tradition Sir Basil Thomson adds: "Mr. Shirley Baker told me that he believed the Haamonga to have been erected as a *fakamanatu* (memorial) to the son of some Tui Tonga, a view that finds support in the fondness of Tongan chiefs for originality in the burial ceremonies of their near relations —witness Mariner's account of the funeral of Finau's daughter

[1] Charles Forbes, in *Archaeologia*, xxxv. 496 (who gives *Ho ha Mo-nga Maui* as the name of the stones); (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 382; *id.*, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 81 (who gives *Haamonga* as the native name of the stones).

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 81. Maui is the great hero of Polynesia, known in nearly every group of islands, generally regarded as a demigod or deified man, but sometimes and in some places rising to the dignity of full godhead. He appears, says Mr. E. Tregear, to unite the classical attributes of Hercules and Prometheus. See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 233, *s.v.* "Maui."

[3] "*Tui-ta-tui*, *lit.* 'King-strike-King.'"

—but on the other hand native traditions generally have a kernel of truth, and the legend of Tui-ta-tui and its consequences finds an analogy in our own custom of guarding against an assassin's dagger at the drinking of the loving cup."[1] The tradition receives some confirmation from the bowl-like hollow on the upper surface of the cross-stone; for the hollow might have served as the king's drinking-cup to hold his kava at the customary wassails. Indeed, Mr. Philip Hervey, the first to examine the monument, describes the hollow in question as "a small cava bowl";[2] and after giving an account of the monument Mr. Brenchley adds: "Its history seems to be entirely unknown, but it is very natural to suppose from its form that it was connected with some ancient kava ceremonies."[3]

The tradition which connects the erection of the monument with the reign of a Tooitonga named Tui-ta-tui is further countenanced, if not confirmed, by a list of the Tooitongas, in which the name of Tui-ta-tui occurs as the eleventh in descent from the great god Tangaloa.[4] This Tui-ta-tui is believed to have reigned in the thirteenth or fourteenth century of our era.[5] From the size and style of the masonry Sir Basil Thomson is disposed to assign the monument to a later date. He points out that for the quarrying and mortising of stones that weigh some fifty tons apiece the craft of stone-cutting must have been fully developed; and from a comparison of the megalithic tombs of the Tooitongas which can be approximately dated, he infers that the craft of stone-cutting in Tonga reached its culmination at the end of the seventeenth century, though it was still practised down to the beginning of the nineteenth century; for Mariner tells us that in his time a professional class of masons was set apart for building the

[1] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 82.

[2] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, Second Series, ii. 77.

[3] Julius L. Brenchley, *Jottings during the Cruise of H.M.S. "Curaçoa" among the South Sea Islands in 1865* (London, 1873), p. 132.

[4] (Sir) Basil Thomson, *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 395. In this work the author prints a list of the Tooitongas "as given by Mr. E. Tregear on the authority of the Rev. J. E. Moulton."

[5] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 83; S. Percy Smith, *Hawaiki*, p. 158.

stone sepulchral vaults of chiefs.[1] Yet on the whole Sir Basil Thomson concludes that "when one is left to choose between a definite native tradition on the one hand and probability on the other for the assignment of a date, I would prefer the tradition. If the Tongans had invented the story as a mere expression for antiquity they would not have pitched upon Tui-ta-tui, about whom nothing else is recorded, in preference to Takalaua, Kau-ulu-fonua-fekai, or any of the kings who loom large in traditionary history. Whether the Haamonga was built for a throne or for a memorial, doubtless it is connected with the reign of Tui-ta-tui, who lived in the fourteenth century."[2]

As an alternative to the view that the hollow on the cross-stone was a kava bowl Dr. Rivers suggests that it "may have been destined to receive the skull and other bones of the dead, so often preserved in Polynesia."[3] The suggestion accords well with the opinion that the monument is a memorial of the dead, and it might be supported by the Samoan practice of severing a dead chief's head from his body and burying it separately, to save it from being dug up and desecrated by enemies in time of war.[4] However, Dr. Rivers is careful to add that such a practice is not recorded in Tonga and appears to be incompatible with the mode of sepulture which prevails there.

In this connexion another megalithic monument of the Tonga islands deserves to be considered, though it appears to have been commonly overlooked. It was observed by Captain Cook in the island of Lefooga (Lifuka). He says: "Near the south end of the island, and on the west side, we met with an artificial mount. From the size of some trees that were growing upon it, and from other appearances, I guessed that it had been raised in remote times. I judged it to be about forty feet high; and the diameter of its summit measured fifty feet. At the bottom of this mount stood a

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 266. As to the size of the stones, Mariner says, "The stones used for this purpose are about a foot in thickness, and are cut of the requisite dimensions, out of the stratum found on the beaches of some of the islands."

[2] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 83 *sq.*

[3] W. H. R. Rivers, *History of Melanesian Society*, ii. 431.

[4] See below, p. 212.

stone, which must have been hewn out of coral rock. It was four feet broad, two and a half thick, and fourteen high; and we were told by the natives present, that not above half its length appeared above ground. They called it *Tangata Arekee*;[1] and said, that it had been set up, and the mount raised, by some of their forefathers, in memory of one of their kings; but how long since, they could not tell."[2]

When we remember that Tongan kings were commonly buried in such mounds as Captain Cook here describes, and further that these mounds were commonly enclosed or faced with great blocks of hewn stone, we may be disposed to accept as reasonable and probable the explanation which the natives gave of this great monolith, which, if the reported measurements of it are correct, must have been no less than twenty-eight feet high. If it was indeed a memorial of a dead king, it might be thought to strengthen the view that the great trilithon was also set up as a monument to a deceased monarch or Tooitonga.

Another possible explanation of the trilithon is, as Sir Basil Thomson points out, that it served as a gateway to some sacred spot inland. But against this view he observes that he examined the bush for some distance in the neighbourhood without finding any trace of ruins or stones of any kind. He adds that the memory of sacred spots dies very hard in Tonga, and that the natives do not believe the trilithon to have been a gateway.[3]

It is natural to compare the trilithon of Tongataboo with the famous trilithons of Stonehenge, which it resembles in plan and to which it is comparable in size. The resemblance struck Dr. Charles Forbes, the first to publish a description of the monument based on personal observation. He says: "The route we pursued led us over a country perfectly level, with the exception of occasional mounds of earth, apparently artificial, and reminding one very much of the barrows of Wilts and Dorset, which idea is still more

[1] "*Tangata*, in their language, is man; *Arekee*, king."

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 298 *sq.* To this description of the monument Sir Basil Thomson has called attention; he rightly classes it with the tombs of the chiefs. See his "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 85.

[3] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 81 *sq.*

strongly impressed upon the mind on coming in sight of the monument, which bears a most striking resemblance to the larger gateway-looking stones at Stonehenge."[1] But at the same time, as Dr. Forbes did not fail to note, the Tongan trilithon differs in some respects from those of Stonehenge. In the first place the interval (ten or twelve feet) between the uprights of the Tongan trilithon appears to be much greater than the interval between the uprights of the trilithons at Stonehenge.[2] In the second place, the cross-stone of the Tongan trilithon is mortised much more deeply into the uprights than are the cross-stones at Stonehenge. For whereas at Stonehenge these cross-stones present the appearance of being laid flat on the top of the uprights, the cross-stone of the Tongan trilithon is sunk deeply into the uprights by means of mortises or grooves about two feet wide which are cut into the uprights, so that the top of the cross-stone is nearly flush with their tops, while its ends also are nearly flush with their outside surfaces.[3]

As the origin and purpose of Stonehenge are still unknown, its massive trilithons can hardly be cited to explain the similar monument of Tongataboo. The rival theories which see in Stonehenge a memorial of the dead and a temple of the sun[4] are equally applicable or inapplicable to the Tongan monument. In favour of the mortuary character of this solitary trilithon it might be urged that the Tongans were long accustomed to erect megalithic monuments, though of a different type, at the tombs of their sacred kings, which are situated not many miles away; but against this view it may be argued that there are no traces of burial or graves in the immediate

[1] Dr. Charles Forbes, in *Archaeologia*, xxxv. p. 496.

[2] I have no measurements of these intervals, but write from the impression of a recent visit to Stonehenge.

[3] (Sir) Basil Thomson, "Notes upon the Antiquities of Tonga," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) p. 82, quoting the anonymous pamphlet *The Wairarapa Wilderness*.

[4] Lord Avebury, *Prehistoric Times*, Seventh Edition (London, 1913), pp. 132 *sqq.*; Sir Norman Lockyer, *Stonehenge and other British Stone Monuments astronomically considered* (London, 1906); C. Schuchhardt, "Stonehenge," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xlii. (1910), pp. 963-968; *id.* in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xliii. (1911) pp. 169-171; *id.*, in *Sitzungsberichte der königl. preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1913, pp. 759 *sqq.* (for the sepulchral interpretation); W. Pastor, "Stonehenge," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, xliii. (1911) pp. 163-169 (for the solar interpretation).

neighbourhood, and that native tradition, not lightly to be set aside, assigns a different origin to the monument. Against the solar interpretation of the trilithon it may be alleged, first, that the monument faces north and south, not east and west, as it might be expected to do if it were a temple of the sun or a gateway leading into such a temple; second, that, while a circle of trilithons, as at Stonehenge, with an opening towards the sunrise may be plausibly interpreted as a temple of the sun, such an interpretation cannot so readily be applied to a solitary trilithon facing north and south; and, third, that no trace of sun-worship has been discovered in the Tonga islands. So far as I have observed, the Tongan pantheon is nowhere said to have included a sun-god, and the Tongans are nowhere reported to have paid any special respect to the sun. Savages in general, it may be added, appear to be very little addicted to sun-worship; it is for the most part among peoples at a much higher level of culture, such as the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, and Peruvians, that solar worship becomes an important, or even the predominant, feature of the national faith.[1] Perhaps the impulse to it came rather from the meditations of priestly astronomers than from the random fancies of common men. Some depth of thought was needed to detect in the sun the source of all life on earth; the immutable regularity of the great luminary's movements failed to rouse the interest or to excite the fear of the savage, to whom the elements of the unusual, the uncertain, and the terrible are the principal incentives to wonder and awe, and hence to reflexion. We are all naturally more impressed by

[1] Adolph Bastian observed that "sun-worship, which people used to go sniffing about to discover everywhere, is found on the contrary only in very exceptional regions or on lofty table-lands of equatorial latitude." See his book, *Die Voelker des Oestlichen Asien*, iv. (Jena, 1868) p. 175. Nobody, probably, has ever been better qualified than Bastian to pronounce an opinion on such a subject; for his knowledge of the varieties of human thought and religion, acquired both by reading and travel, was immense. It is only to be regretted that through haste or negligence he too often gave out the fruits of his learning in a form which rendered it difficult to sift and almost impossible to digest them. Yet from his storehouse he brought forth a treasure, of which we may say what Macaulay said of the scholarship of Parr, that it was "too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid."

extraordinary than by ordinary events; the fine edge of the mind is dulled by familiarity in the one case and whetted by curiosity in the other.

Bearing in mind the numerous other stone monuments scattered widely over the islands of the Pacific, from the Carolines to Easter Island, Dr. Guillemard concludes that some race, with a different, if not a higher civilisation preceded the Polynesian race in its present homes, and to this earlier race he would apparently refer the erection of the trilithon in Tongataboo.[1] He may be right. Yet when we consider, first, the native tradition of the setting up of the trilithon by one of the sacred kings of Tonga; second, the practice of the Tongans of building megalithic tombs for these same sacred kings; and, third, the former existence in Tonga of a professional class of masons whose business it was to construct stone vaults for the burial of chiefs,[2] we may hesitate to resort to the hypothesis of an unknown people in order to explain the origin of a monument which the Tongans, as we know them, appear to have been quite capable of building for themselves.

§ 11. *Rites of Burial and Mourning*

The only mode of disposing of the dead which was practised in the Tonga islands seems to have been burial in the earth. So far as appears, the corpse was not doubled up, but laid at full length in the grave; at all events I have met with no mention of burying a corpse in a contracted posture; and Captain Cook says that "when a person dies, he is buried, after being wrapped up in mats and cloth, much after our manner." He adds that, while chiefs had the special burial-places called *fiatookas* appropriated to their use, common people were interred in no particular spot.[3] So far as I have observed, none of our authorities speak of a practice of embalming the dead or of giving the bodies any particular direction in the grave.

After a death the mourners testified their sorrow by dressing in old ragged mats and wearing green leaves of

[1] F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 500.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 266.

[3] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 421.

the *ifi* tree round their necks. Thus attired they would repair to the tomb, where, on entering the enclosure, they would pull off the green twigs from their necks and throw them away; then sitting down they would solemnly drink kava.[1] Further, they accompanied their cries and ejaculations of grief and despair by inflicting on their own bodies many grievous wounds and injuries. They burned circles and scars on their bodies, beat their teeth with stones, struck shark's teeth into their heads till the blood flowed in streams, and thrust spears into the inner part of the thigh, into their sides below the arm-pits, and through the cheeks into the mouth.[2] Women in wailing would cut off their fingers, and slit their noses, their ears, and their cheeks.[3] At the funerals of the kings especially the mourners indulged in frantic excesses of self-torture and mutilation. Of two such funerals we have the detailed descriptions of eye-witnesses who resided in the islands at a time when the natives were as yet practically unaffected by European influence. King Moomōoe died in April 1797, and the first missionaries to Tonga witnessed and described his funeral. They have told how, when the corpse was being carried in procession to a temporary house near the royal burial-ground (*fiatooka*), it was preceded by relatives of the deceased in the usual mourning garb, who cut their heads with shark's teeth till the blood streamed down their faces. A few days later, when the burial was to take place, the missionaries found about four thousand people assembled at the mound where the body was to be interred. In a few minutes they heard a great shouting and blowing of conch-shells, and soon after there appeared about a hundred men, armed with clubs and spears, who, rushing into the area, began to cut and mangle themselves in a most dreadful manner. Many struck their heads such violent blows with their clubs that the sound could be heard thirty or forty yards off, and they repeated them till

[1] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 345 *sq.* As to the mourning costume of mats and leaves, see also Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 240; W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 380, 392, 431, ii. 214 *sq.*

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 420.

[3] Jérôme Grange, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xvii. (1845) p. 13.

the blood ran down in streams. Others, who had spears, thrust them through their thighs, arms, and cheeks, all the while calling on the deceased in a most affecting manner. A native of Fiji, who had been a servant of the late king, appeared quite frantic; he entered the area with fire in his hand, and having previously oiled his hair, he set it ablaze, and ran about with it all on flame. When they had satisfied or exhausted themselves with this manner of torment, they sat down, beat their faces with their fists, and then retired. A second party then inflicted on themselves the same cruelties. A third party next entered, shouting and blowing shells; four of the foremost held stones, which they used to knock out their teeth, while those who blew the shells employed them as knives with which they hacked their heads in a shocking manner. A man who had a spear pierced his arm with it just above the elbow, and with it sticking fast in his flesh ran about the area for some time. Another, who seemed to be a principal chief, acted as if quite bereft of his senses; he ran to every corner of the area, and at each station beat his head with a club till the blood flowed down on his shoulders. At this point the missionary, unable to bear the sight of these self-inflicted tortures, quitted the scene. When his colleagues visited the place some hours later in the afternoon, they found the natives of both sexes still at the dreadful work of cutting and mangling themselves. In the course of these proceedings a party of mourners entered the area, sixteen of whom had recently cut off their little fingers. They were followed by another party with clubs and spears, who battered and wounded themselves in the usual fashion, and also disfigured their faces with coco-nut husks, which they had fastened to the knuckles of both hands. The missionaries noticed that the mourners who were either related to the dead king or had held office under him, were the most cruel to themselves; some of them thrust two, three, and even four spears into their arms, and so danced round the area, while others broke off the spear-heads in their flesh.[1]

[1] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 242-244.

Similar scenes were witnessed some years later by Mariner at the death and burial of Finow, another king of Tonga; and the Englishman has described from personal observation how on this occasion the mourners cut and wounded their heads and bodies with clubs, stones, knives, or sharp shells. This they did on one or other of the *malais*[1] or ceremonial grounds in the presence of many spectators, vying apparently with each other in the effort to surpass the rest in this public manifestation of their sorrow for the death of the king and their respect for his memory. As one ran out into the middle of the ground he would cry, "Finow! I know well your mind; you have departed to Bolotoo, and left your people under suspicion that I, or some of those about you, were unfaithful; but where is the proof of infidelity? where is a single instance of disrespect?" Then, inflicting violent blows and deep cuts on his head with a club, stone, or knife, he would again exclaim at intervals, "Is this not a proof of my fidelity? does this not evince loyalty and attachment to the memory of the departed warrior?" Some more violent than others cut their heads to the skull with such heavy and repeated blows that they reeled and lost their reason for a time.[2] The king's successor, Finow the Second, not content with the usual instruments of torture, employed a saw for the purpose, striking his skull with the teeth so violently that he staggered for loss of blood; but this he did, not at the time of the burial and in presence of the multitude, but some weeks later at a more private ceremony of mourning before the grave.[3] At the public ceremony the late king's fishermen varied the usual breaking of heads and slashing of bodies by a peculiar form of self-torment. Instead of clubs they appropriately carried the paddles of canoes, with which they battered their heads in the orthodox style; but besides every man of them had three arrows stuck through each cheek in a slanting direction, so that, while the points pierced through the cheeks into the mouth, the other

[1] Mariner defines a *malai* as "a piece of ground, generally before a large house, or chief's grave, where public ceremonies are principally held" (*Tonga Islands*, vol. ii., "Vocabulary" *s.v.*). It is the same word as *malae* or *marae*, noticed above, p. 116, note [3].

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 379-384.

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 440-442.

ends went over the shoulder and were kept in position by another arrow, the point of which was tied to the ends of the arrows passing over one shoulder, while the other end was tied to the ends of the other arrows which passed over the other shoulder. Thus each fisherman was decorated with a triangle of arrows, of which the apex consisted of six arrow-heads in his mouth, while the base dangled on his back. With this remarkable equipment they walked round the grave, beating their faces and heads with their paddles, or pinching up the skin of the breast and sticking a spear right through it.[1]

The grave of a chief's family was a vault paved with a single large stone, while the four walls were formed each of a single block. The vault was about eight feet long, six feet broad, and eight feet deep, and was covered at the top by one large stone.[2] So heavy was this covering stone that, as we have seen, from a hundred and fifty to two hundred men were required to lift and lower it.[3] Mariner estimated that the family vault in which King Finow was interred was large enough to hold thirty bodies. When the king's corpse was being deposited in it, Mariner saw two dry and perfectly preserved bodies lying in the vault, together with the bones of several others; and he was told by old men that the well-preserved bodies had been buried when they, his informants, were boys, which must have been upwards of forty years before; whereas the bodies of which nothing but the bones remained had been buried later. The natives attributed the exceptional preservation of the two to the better constitution of their former owners; Mariner, or more probably his editor, Dr. Martin, preferred to suppose that the difference was due to the kind or duration of the disease which had carried them off. Apparently the natives did not suggest that the bodies had been embalmed, which they would almost certainly have done if they had known of such a custom.[4] No sooner was the king's body deposited in the grave, and the great stone lowered over it, than certain ministers (*matabooles*) and warriors ran like men frantic

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 404 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 144 note *.

[3] See above, p. 105.

[4] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 388 note *.

round and round the burial-ground, exclaiming, "Alas! how great is our loss! Finow! you are departed; witness this proof of our love and loyalty!" At the same time they cut and bruised their own heads with clubs, knives, and axes in the usual fashion.[1] Afterwards the grave was filled up with earth and strewed with sand, which a company of women and men had brought for the purpose in baskets from a place at the back of the island; what remained of the sand was scattered over the sepulchral mound (*fytoca*), of which it was deemed a great embellishment. The inside of the burial-ground was then spread with mats made of coco-nut leaves.[2]

Meantime the company of mourners had been seated on the green before the burial-ground, still wearing their mourning garb of mats, with leaves of the *ifi* tree strung round their necks. They now arose and went to their homes, where they shaved their heads and burnt their cheeks with a lighted roll of bark-cloth, by applying it once upon each cheek-bone; next they rubbed the place with an astringent berry, which caused it to bleed, and afterwards they smeared the blood in a broad circle round the wound, giving themselves a very ghastly appearance. They repeated this friction with the berry every day, making the wound bleed afresh; and the men meanwhile neglected to shave and to oil themselves during the day, though they indulged in these comforts at night. Having burnt their cheeks and shaved their heads, they built for themselves small temporary huts, where they lived during the time of mourning, which lasted twenty days.[3]

The women who had become tabooed, that is, in a state of ceremonial pollution, by touching the king's dead body, remained constantly within the burial-ground for the twenty days of mourning, except when they retired to one of the temporary huts to eat,[4] or rather to be fed by others. For it was a rule that no ordinary person, man or woman, could touch a dead chief without being tabooed, that is ceremonially polluted, for ten lunar months, during which time he or she might not touch food with their own hands. But for

[1] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 388 *sq.*
[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 389-392.
[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 392 *sq.*
[4] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 393.

chiefs the period of pollution was limited to three, four, or five months, according to the superiority of the dead chief. Only when the dead body which they had touched was that of the sacred chief, the Tooitonga, they were all tabooed for ten months, however high their rank ; for example, the king's wife was tabooed for that length of time during the residence of Mariner, because she had touched the dead body of the Tooitonga. During the time that a person was tabooed, he might not feed himself with his own hands, but must be fed by somebody else : he might not even use a toothpick himself, but might guide another person's hand holding the toothpick. If he was hungry and had no one to feed him, he must go down on his hands and knees, and pick up his victuals with his mouth ; and if he infringed any of these rules, it was firmly expected that he would swell up and die.[1] Captain Cook observed this custom in operation at Tonga-taboo. On one of his walks he met with a party of women at supper, and noticed that two of them were being fed by others. On asking the reason, he was answered *taboo mattee*, that is, "Death taboo." It was explained to him that one of the women had washed the dead body of a chief two months before, and that consequently she might not handle any food for five months. The other had performed the same office for the corpse of another person of inferior rank, and was now under the same restriction, but not for so long a time.[2] The tabooed women at Finow's grave were supplied with food by the new king, Finow the Second. The food was brought and placed on the ground at some distance from the grave, or else it was deposited before the temporary house to which the chief of the tabooed women retired to be fed. With the provisions was also sent every day a supply of torches to light up the burial-ground by night. The torches were held up by a woman of inferior rank, who, when she was tired, was relieved in her office by another. During the twenty days of mourning, if any one passed the burial-ground, he had to go at a slow pace, with his head bowed down, and

[1] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 141 note *.

[2] Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, v. 336. The writer does not translate the expression *taboo mattee* ; but *mate* is the regular Tongan word for "death" or "to die." See Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, Vocabulary, *s.v.* "Mate." Compare E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 228, *s.v.* "Mate."

his hands clasped before him; and if he carried a burden, he must lower it from his shoulder and carry it in his hands or on his bended arms; but if he could not do so conveniently, he had to make a circuit to avoid the grave.

Such were the regular observances at the death and burial of chiefs; they were not peculiar to the obsequies of Finow the king.[1]

The twentieth day of mourning concluded the ceremonies in honour of the deceased monarch. Early in the morning all his relations, together with the members of his household, and also the women who were tabooed on account of having touched his dead body in the process of oiling and preparing it, went to the back of the island to procure a quantity of flat pebbles, principally white, but a few black, which they brought back in baskets to the grave. There they strewed the inside of the house and the outside of the burial-ground (*fytoca*) with the white pebbles as a decoration; the black pebbles they laid only on the top of those white ones which covered the ground directly over the body, to about the length and breadth of a man, in the form of a very eccentric ellipse. After that, the house on the burial mound was closed up at both ends with a reed fencing, which reached from the eaves to the ground; while at the front and the back the house was closed with a sort of basket-work, made of the young branches of the coco-nut tree, split and interwoven in a very curious and ornamental way. These fences were to remain until the next burial, when they would be taken down and, after the conclusion of the ceremony, replaced by new ones of similar pattern. A large quantity of food and kava was now sent by the chiefs and the king to the public place (*malai*) in front of the burial mound, and these provisions were served out among the people in the usual way. The company then separated and repaired to their respective houses, to prepare for the dances and the grand wrestling-match, which were to conclude the funeral rites.[2]

During the intervals of the dances, which followed, several warriors and ministers (*matabooles*) ran before the grave,

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 394 *sq.*
[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* i. 401-403.

cutting and bruising their heads with axes, clubs, and so forth as proofs of fidelity to their late chief, the dead and buried King Finow. It was on this occasion that the deceased king's fishermen demonstrated their loyalty and attachment to his memory by the self-inflicted tortures which I have already described.[1] When these exhibitions of cruelty were over, the day's ceremonies, which altogether lasted about six hours, were terminated by a grand wrestling-match. That being over, the people dispersed to their respective houses or occupations, and the obsequies of Finow, king of the Tonga islands, came to an end.[2]

The wrestling-match which wound up the funeral honours paid to the departed monarch would seem not to have been an isolated case of athletic sports held at this particular funeral. Apparently it was a general custom in Tonga to conclude burial-rites with games of this kind. At least we may infer as much from an expression made use of by the first missionaries to Tongataboo. They say that the chief of their district, after taking to himself a wife in the morning went in the afternoon "to finish the funeral ceremonies for his brother, in celebrating the games usual on that occasion."[3] The practice, which is apt to seem to us incongruous, of holding games at a funeral, was observed by the Greeks in antiquity and by not a few other peoples in modern times.[4]

On the other hand the obsequies of the sacred or divine chief, the Tooitonga, differed in certain remarkable particulars from the posthumous honours generally paid to chiefs. It is true that his burial-place was of the same form as that of other chiefs, and that the mode of his interment did not differ essentially from theirs, except that it was customary to deposit some of his most valuable property with him in the grave, including his beads, whale's teeth, fine Samoan mats, and other articles. Hence the family burying-place of the Tooitongas in the island of Tongataboo, where the whole line of these pontiffs had been interred, must have become very rich in the course of time; for no native would dare to commit

[1] Above, pp. 135 *sq.*

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 403-405.

[3] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 265.

[4] *The Golden Bough*, Part III., *The Dying God*, pp. 92 *sqq.*

the sacrilege of stealing the treasures at the holy tomb.[1] However, the sacrifice of property to the dead seems not to have been, as Mariner supposed, peculiar to the funeral of the Tooitonga ; for at the burial of King Moomōoe, in May 1797, the first missionaries saw files of women and men bringing bags of valuable articles, fine mats, and bales of cloth, which they deposited in the tomb expressly as a present for the dead.[2] Again, the mourning costume worn for the Tooitonga was the same as that for any chief, consisting of ragged old mats on the body and leaves of the *ifi* tree round the neck ; but in the case of the Tooitonga the time of mourning was extended to four months, the mats being generally left off after three months, while the leaves were still retained for another month ; and the female mourners remained within the burial-ground (*fytoca, fiatooka*) for about two months, instead of twenty days, only retiring occasionally to temporary houses in the neighbourhood to eat or for other necessary purposes.[3]

One very remarkable peculiarity in the mourning for a Tooitonga was that, though he ranked above the king and all other chiefs, the mourners strictly abstained from manifesting their grief by wounding their heads and cutting their bodies in the manner that was customary at the funerals of all other great men. Mariner was never able to learn the reason for this abstention.[4]

Other peculiar features in the obsequies of a Tooitonga were the following. In the afternoon of the day of burial, when the body of the Tooitonga was already within the burial-ground, almost every man, woman, and child, all dressed in the usual mourning garb, and all provided with torches, used to sit down about eighty yards from the grave ; in the course of an hour a multitude of several thousands would thus assemble. One of the female mourners would then come forth from the burial-ground and call out to the people, saying, "Arise ye, and approach" ; whereupon the people would get up, and advancing about forty yards would again sit down. Two men behind the grave now began to

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 213 *sq.*

[2] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 243.

[3] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 214 *sq.*

[4] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 213.

blow conch-shells, and six others, with large lighted torches, about six feet high, advanced from behind the burial-ground, descended the mound, and walked in single file several times between the burial-ground and the people, waving their flaming torches in the air. After that they began to ascend the mound, whereupon all the people rose up together and made a loud crashing noise by snapping their *bolatas*, which were pieces of the stem of a banana tree used to receive the ashes falling from lighted torches. Having done so, the people followed the torch-bearers in single file up the mound and walked in procession round about the tomb (*fytoca*). As they passed at the back of the tomb, they all, torch-bearers and people, deposited their extinguished torches on the ground; while the female mourners within thanked them for providing these things. Having thus marched round, the people returned to their places and sat down. Thereupon the master of the ceremonies came forward and ordered them to divide themselves into parties according to their districts; which being done he assigned to one party the duty of clearing away the bushes and grass from one side of the grave, and to another party a similar task in regard to another side of the grave, while a third party was charged to remove rubbish, and so forth. In this way the whole neighbourhood of the burial-ground was soon cleared, and when this was done, all the people returned to the temporary houses which, as mourners, they were bound to occupy.[1]

Soon after darkness had fallen, certain persons stationed at the grave began again to sound the conches, while others chanted a song, or rather recitative, partly in the Samoan dialect, partly in an unknown language, of which the natives could give no account. None of them understood the words, nor could they explain how their forefathers came to learn them. All that they knew was that the words had been handed down from father to son among the class of people whose business it was to direct burial ceremonies. According to Mariner, some of the words were Tongan, and he thought that the language was probably an old or corrupt form of Tongan, though he could make no sense out of it. Such traditional repetition of a litany in an unknown tongue

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 215-217.

is not uncommon among savages; it occurs, for instance, very frequently among some of the aboriginal tribes of Australia, where the chants or recitatives accompanying certain dances or ceremonies are often passed on from one tribe to another, the members of which perform the borrowed dance or ceremony and repeat by rote the borrowed chants or recitatives without understanding a word of them.[1]

While the conches were sounding and the voices of the singers broke the silence of night, about sixty men assembled before the grave, where they awaited further orders. When the chanting was over, and the notes of the conches had ceased to sound, one of the women mourners came forward, and sitting down outside the graveyard addressed the men thus: "Men! ye are gathered here to perform the duty imposed on you; bear up, and let not your exertions be wanting to accomplish the work." With these words she retired into the burial-ground. The men now approached the mound in the dark, and, in the words of Mariner, or his editor, performed their devotions to Cloacina, after which they withdrew. As soon as it was daylight the next morning, the women of the first rank, wives and daughters of the greatest chiefs, assembled with their female attendants, bringing baskets and shells wherewith to clear up the deposit of the preceding night; and in this ceremonious act of humility no lady of the highest rank refused to take her part. Some of the mourners in the burial-ground generally came out to assist, so that in a very little while the place was made perfectly clean. This deposit was repeated the fourteen following nights, and as punctually cleared away by sunrise every morning. No persons but the agents were allowed to be witnesses of these extraordinary ceremonies; at least it would have been considered highly indecorous and irreligious to pry upon them. On the sixteenth day, early in the morning, the same women again assembled, but now they were dressed in the finest bark-cloth and beautiful Samoan mats, decorated with ribbons and with wreaths of flowers

[1] W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-west-central Queensland Aborigines* (Brisbane and London, 1897), pp. 117 *sq.*; (Sir) Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1904), pp. 234, 235; *id.*, *Native Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1899), p. 281 note; *id.*, *Across Australia* (London, 1912), i. 244.

round their necks; they also brought new baskets, ornamented with flowers, and little brooms very tastefully made. Thus equipped, they approached and acted as if they had the same task to perform as before, pretending to clear up the dirt, and to take it away in their baskets, though there was no dirt to remove. Then they returned to the capital and resumed their mourning dress of mats and leaves. Such were the rites performed during the fifteen days; every day the ceremony of the burning torches was also repeated.[1]

For one month from the day of burial, greater or less quantities of provisions were brought every day and shared out to the people. On the first day the quantity supplied was prodigious; but day by day the supply gradually diminished till on the last day it was reduced to very little.[2] Nevertheless the consumption or waste of food on such occasions was so great that to guard against a future dearth of provisions it was deemed necessary to lay a prohibition or taboo on the eating of hogs, fowls, and coco-nuts for a period of eight or ten months, though two or three plantations were exempted from this rigorous embargo, to the end that in the meantime hogs, fowls, and coco-nuts might be furnished for occasional religious rites, and that the higher order of chiefs might be able to partake of these victuals. At the end of the eight or ten months' fast the taboo was removed and permission to eat of the forbidden foods was granted by the king at a solemn ceremony. Immense quantities of yams having been collected and piled up in columns, and some three or four hundred hogs having been killed, the people assembled from all quarters at the king's *malái* or public place. Of the slaughtered hogs about twenty were deposited, along with a large quantity of yams, at the grave of the deceased Tooitonga. The rest of the provisions were shared out in definite proportions among the gods, the king, the divine chief (the living Tooitonga), the inferior chiefs, and the people, so that every man in the island of Tongataboo got at least a mouthful of pork and yam. The ceremony concluded with dancing, wrestling, and other sports, after which every person retired to his home

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 217-219.

[2] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, ii. 220.

with his portion of food to share it with his family. The hogs and yams deposited at the dead Tooitonga's grave were left lying till the pork stank and the yams were rotten, whereupon the living Tooitonga ordered that they should be distributed to all who chose to apply for a portion. In strict law they belonged to the principal chiefs, but as these persons were accustomed to feed on meat in a rather less advanced stage of decomposition they kindly waived their claims to the putrid pork and rotten yams in favour of the lower orders, who were less nice in their eating.[1]

It was customary that the chief widow of the Tooitonga should be strangled and interred with his dead body.[2] But the practice of strangling a wife at her husband's funeral was not limited to the widows of the Tooitongas. A similar sacrifice seems to have been formerly offered at the obsequies of a king; for at the funeral of King Moomōoe the first missionaries to Tonga saw two of the king's widows being led away to be strangled.[3]

The funeral and mourning customs which we have passed in review serve to illustrate the Tongan conceptions of the soul and of its survival after death. The strangling of widows was probably intended here as elsewhere to despatch their spirits to attend their dead husbands in the spirit land;[4] and the deposition of valuable property in the grave can hardly have had, at least in origin, any other object than to ensure the comfort of the departed in the other world, and incidentally, perhaps, to remove from him any temptation to return to his sorrowing friends in this world for the purpose of recovering the missing articles. The self-inflicted wounds and bruises of the mourners were clearly intended to impress the ghost with the sincerity of their regret at his departure from this sublunary scene; if any doubt could linger in our minds as to the intention of these extravagant proceedings, it would be set at rest by the

[1] W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*, i. 112 *sq.*, 120-126, ii. 220.

[2] W. Mariner, *op. cit.* ii. 135, 209 *sq.*, 214.

[3] Captain James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 240.

[4] This was the reason assigned for the strangling of widows at their husband's funeral in Fiji. See John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 478 *sq.*

words with which, as we have seen, the mourners accompanied them, calling on the dead man to witness their voluntary tortures and to judge for himself of the genuineness of their sorrow. In this connexion it is to be borne in mind that all dead noblemen, in the opinion of the Tongans, were at once promoted to the rank of deities; so that it was in their power to visit any disrespect to their memory and any defalcation of their dues with the double terror of ghosts and of gods. No wonder that the Tongans sought to keep on good terms with such mighty beings by simulating, when they did not feel, a sense of the irreparable loss which the world had sustained by their dissolution.

§ 12. *The Ethical Influence of Tongan Religion*

Surveyed as a whole, the Tongan religion presents a singular instance of a creed which restricted the hope of immortality to the nobly born and denied it to commoners. According to the doctrine which it inculcated, the aristocratic pre-eminence accorded to chiefs in this world was more than maintained by them in the next, where they enjoyed a monopoly of immortality. And not content with sojourning in the blissful regions of Bolotoo, their departed spirits often returned to earth to warn, to direct, to threaten their people, either in dreams and visions of the night, or by the mouth of the priests whom they inspired. Such beliefs involved in theory and to some extent in practice a subjection of the living to the dead, of the seen and temporal to the unseen and eternal. In favour of the creed it may at least be alleged that, while it looked to spiritual powers, whether ghosts or gods, for the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice, it did not appeal to another life to redress the balance of justice which had been disturbed in this one. The Tongan religion inculcated a belief that the good and the bad alike receive a recompense here on earth, thus implicitly repudiating the unworthy notion that men can only be lured or driven into the narrow way of righteousness by the hope of heaven or the fear of hell. So far the creed based morality on surer foundations than any faith which would rest the ultimate sanctions of

conduct on the slippery ground of posthumous rewards and punishments. In this respect, if in no other, we may compare the Tongan religion to that of the Hebrew prophets. It has been rightly observed by Renan that whereas European races in general have found in the assurance of a life to come ample compensation for the iniquities of this present life, the Hebrew prophets never appeal to rewards and punishments reserved for a future state of existence. They were not content with the conception of a lame and laggard justice that limps far behind the sinner in this world and only overtakes him in the next. According to them, God's justice is swift and sure here on earth; an unjust world was in their eyes a simple monstrosity.[1] So too, apparently, thought the Tongans, and some Europeans may be inclined to agree with them.

[1] E. Renan, *Histoire du peuple d'Israël*, ii. 505.

CHAPTER III

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE SAMOANS

§ 1. *The Samoan Islands*

ABOUT three hundred and fifty or four hundred miles nearly due north of Tonga lies Samoa, a group of islands situated between 13° 30′ and 14° 30′ South latitude and between 168° and 173° West longitude. The native name of the group is Samoa, which has this singularity, that it is apparently the only name that designates a group of islands in the Pacific; native names for all the other groups are wanting, though each particular island has its own individual name. Samoa is also known to Europeans as the Navigators' Islands, a name bestowed on them by the French explorer De Bougainville, who visited the group in 1768. The three most easterly islands were discovered in 1722 by Jacob Roggewein, a Dutch navigator, but he appears not to have sighted the principal islands of the group, which lie a good deal farther to the westward. There is no record of any visit paid by a European vessel to the islands in the interval between the visits of Roggewein and De Bougainville. The whole archipelago was not explored till 1787, when the French navigator La Pérouse determined the position of all the islands.[1]

The islands are disposed in a line running from west to east. The most westerly, Savaii, is also the largest,

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, New Edition (New York, 1851), ii. 117; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa* (London, 1897), pp. 21 *sq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. (London, 1894) p. 500; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians* (London, 1910), pp. 1, 360.

measuring about forty miles in length. Next follow two small, but important islands, Apolima and Manona. Then about three miles to the east of Manona comes Upolu, the second of the islands in size, but the first in importance, whether we regard population, harbours, or the extent of soil available for cultivation. The channel which divides Upolu from Savaii is from fifteen to twenty miles broad. About forty miles to the east, or rather south-east, of Upolu lies the island of Tutuila, with the fine and almost landlocked harbour of Pangopango. It was in this island that the French navigator La Pérouse lost his second in command and twelve men in a fierce encounter with the natives. The place where the fight took place is now known as Massacre Cove.[1] Some fifty miles to the east of Tutuila is situated a group of three small islands, Tau, Ofu, and Olosenga, which are collectively known as Manua.

The islands are of volcanic formation and for the most part surrounded by coral reefs, but the intervening seas are quite free from danger, and the possession of good harbours renders Samoa politically important. Viewed from the sea the islands are mountainous and for the most part wooded to the water's edge, except where a stretch of fertile plain is interposed between the foot of the mountains and the sea. The whole group presents to the voyager a succession of enchanting views as he sails along the coast. The eye is delighted by the prospect of lofty and rugged mountains, their tops sometimes lost in clouds, their slopes mantled in the verdure of evergreen forests, varied here and there by rich valleys, by grey and lofty cliffs, or by foaming waterfalls tumbling from heights of hundreds of feet and showing like silvery threads against the sombre green of the woods. Along the shore rocks of black lava alternate with white sands dazzling in the sunlight and fringed by groves of coco-nut palms, their feathery tops waving and dancing in the breeze, while the brilliant cobalt blue of the calm lagoon contrasts with the olive-green of the deep sea, which breaks in a long line of seething foam on the barrier reef. The scenery as a

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 27 *sq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* pp. 500, 504.

whole combines romantic grandeur with wild and rank luxuriance, thus winning for Samoa the reputation of being among the loveliest of the islands which stud like gems the bosom of the Pacific.[1]

The island of Upolu in particular is wooded from its summit to the water's edge, where in some places the roots of the trees are washed by the surf, while in many places clumps of mangrove trees spread out into the lagoon. The forests are dense and more sombre even than those of Brazil. The lofty trees shoot up to a great height before sending out branches. At their feet grow ferns of many sorts, while climbing vines and other creepers mantle their trunks and sometimes even their tops. But the gloom of the tropical forest is seldom or never relieved by flowers of brilliant tints; the few flowers that bloom in them are of a white or greyish hue, as if bleached for want of the sunbeams, which are shut out by the thick umbrageous foliage overhead.[2]

Very different from the aspect presented by this luxuriant vegetation is a great part of the interior of Savaii, the largest island of the group. Here the desolate and forbidding character of the landscape constantly reminds the traveller of the dreadful forces which slumber beneath his feet. Extinct volcanoes tower above him to heights of four and five thousand feet, their steep and almost perpendicular sides formed of volcanic ashes and denuded of vegetation. For miles around these gloomy peaks the ground presents nothing to the eye but black rocks, scoriae, and ashes; the forlorn wayfarer seems to be traversing a furnace barely extinguished, so visible are the traces of fire on the sharp-pointed stones among which he picks his painful way, and which in their twisted and tormented forms seem still to preserve something of the movement of the once boiling flood of molten lava. The whole country is

[1] J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London, 1853), p. 110; T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), p. 40; J. L. Brenchley, *Jottings during the Cruise of H.M.S. "Curaçoa" among the South Sea Islands in 1865* (London, 1873), pp. 37-39, 61 *sq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 502 *sq.*; John B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 26 *sqq.*

[2] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 31 *sq.*, 52 *sq.*

a barren and waterless wilderness, a solitude destitute alike of animal and of vegetable life, alternately parched by the fierce rays of the tropical sun and deluged by hurricanes of torrential rain. Even the natives cannot traverse these dreary deserts; a European who strayed into them was found, after five or six days, prostrate and almost dead on the ground.[1]

In Samoa, as in Tonga, volcanic activity has ominously increased within less than a hundred years. Near the island of Olosenga, in 1866 or 1867, a submarine volcano suddenly burst out in eruption, vomiting forth rocks and mud to a height, as it was estimated, of two thousand feet, killing the fish and discolouring the sea for miles round.[2] Still later, towards the end of 1905, another volcano broke out in the bottom of a deep valley in the island of Savaii, and rose till it attained a height of about four thousand feet. Down at least to the year 1910 this immense volcano was still in full action, and had covered many miles of country under a bed of lava some ten or twelve feet thick, while with the same river of molten matter it completely filled up the neighbouring lagoon and replaced the level shore by an iron-bound coast of volcanic cliffs.[3]

A remarkable instance of these volcanic cliffs is furnished by the little island of Apolima between Savaii and Upolu. The islet, which is in fact the crater of an extinct volcano, is only about a mile long by half to three-quarters of a mile in width. On every side but one it presents to the sea a precipitous wall of basaltic rock some thousand feet high, while the interior is scooped out in the likeness of a great cauldron. Only at one place is there a break in the cliffs where a landing can be effected, and there the operation is difficult and dangerous even in fine weather. In bad weather the island is completely isolated. Thus it forms a strong natural fortress, which under the conditions of native warfare was almost impregnable.[4]

[1] Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) pp. 71 *sq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 502 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 34; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 1 *sqq.*

[2] F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* ii. 504; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 43.

[3] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 3.

[4] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 33 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 171.

As might be expected from their volcanic formation, the islands are subject to frequent and sometimes severe shocks of earthquake. The veteran missionary, J. B. Stair, has recorded that the shocks increased in number and violence during the last years of his residence in Samoa. The last of them was preceded by loud subterranean noises, which lasted for hours, to the great alarm of the natives. At the north-west of Upolu also, Mr. Stair used often to hear a muffled sound, like the rumble of distant thunder, proceeding apparently from the sea under the reef. This curious noise always occurred on hot, sultry days, and seemed to strike a note of warning, which filled natives and Europeans alike with a sense of awe and insecurity.[1] Thus if, beheld from some points of view, the Samoan islands appear an earthly paradise, from others they present the aspect, and emit the sounds, of an inferno.

And with all their natural beauty and charm the islands cannot be said to enjoy a healthy climate. There is much bad weather, particularly during the winter months, when long and heavy rains, attended at times with high winds and gales, are frequent. The air is more moist than in Tahiti, and the vegetation in consequence is more rank and luxuriant. Decaying rapidly under the ardent rays of a tropical sun, it exhales a poisonous miasma. But the heat, oppressive and exhausting at times, is nevertheless tempered by the sea and land breezes, which blow daily, alternating with intervals of calm between them. Besides these daily breezes the trade wind blows regularly from the east during the fine season, when the sky is constantly blue and cloudless. Yet with all these alleviations the climate is enervating, and a long residence in it is debilitating to the European frame.[2] Nor are the natives exempt from the noxious effects of an atmosphere saturated with moisture and impregnated with the fumes of vegetable decay. The open nature of their dwell-

[1] T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), p. 145; J. B. Stair, *op. cit.* pp. 41 *sq.*

[2] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 118; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 72 (who, however, affirms that the climate is not unhealthy); T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), pp. 144 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 16, 35 *sqq.*

ings, which were without walls, exposed them to the heavy night dews and rendered them susceptible to diseases of the chest and lungs, from which they suffered greatly; consumption in its many forms, coughs, colds, inflammation of the chest and lungs, fevers, rheumatism, pleurisy, diarrhœa, lumbago, diseases of the spine, scrofula, and many other ailments are enumerated among the disorders which afflicted them. But the prevailing disease is elephantiasis, a dreadful malady which attacks Europeans and natives alike. There are many cases of epilepsy, and though idiots are rare, lunatics are less infrequent. Hunchbacks are very common in both sexes, and virulent ophthalmia is prevalent; many persons lose the sight of one eye, and some are totally blinded; not less than a fifth part of the population is estimated to suffer from this malady.[1] Curiously enough, hunchbacks, who are said to be very numerous on account of scrofula, used to be looked on as special favourites of the spirits, and many of them, on growing to manhood, were accordingly admitted to the priesthood.[2]

During the stormy season, which lasts from December to April, hurricanes sometimes occur, and are greatly dreaded by the natives on account of the havoc which they spread both among the crops and the houses. A steady rain, the absence of the sun, a deathlike stillness of the birds and domestic animals, and above all the dark and lowering aspect of the sky, are the premonitory symptoms of the coming calamity and inspire general consternation, while the thunderous roar of the torrents and waterfalls in the mountains strike on the ear with redoubled distinctness in the prevailing silence which preludes the storm. Warned by these ominous signs, the natives rush to secure their property from being swept away by the fury of the blast. Some hurry their canoes inland to places of comparative safety; others pile trunks of banana-trees on the roofs of their houses or fasten down the roofs by hanging heavy stones over them;

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 124 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 165 *sq.*, 169 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 180 *sqq.*

[2] S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 622.

while yet others bring rough poles, hastily cut in the forest, and set them up inside the houses as props against the rafters, to prevent the roof from falling in. Sometimes these efforts are successful, sometimes futile, the hurricane sweeping everything before it in its mad career, while the terrified natives behold the fruits of months of toil, sometimes the growth of years, laid waste in an hour. On such occasions the shores have been seen flooded by the invading ocean, houses carried clean away, and a forest turned suddenly into a bare and treeless plain. Men have been forced to fling themselves flat on the ground and to dig their hands into the earth to save themselves from being whirled away and precipitated into the sea or a torrent. In April 1850 the town of Apia, the capital of the islands, was almost destroyed by one of these cyclones. When the rage of the tornado is spent and calm has returned, the shores of a harbour are apt to present a melancholy scene of ruin and desolation, their shores strewn with the wrecks of gallant ships which lately rode there at anchor, their pennons streaming to the wind. So it happened in the harbour of Apia on March 16th, 1889. Before the tempest burst, there were many ships of various nations anchored in the bay, among them five or six American and German warships. When it was over, all were wrecked and their shattered fragments littered the reefs. One vessel alone, the British man-of-war, *Calliope*, was saved by the courage and skill of the captain, who, seconded by the splendid seamanship of the crew, forced his ship, in the very teeth of the hurricane, out into the open sea, where he safely weathered the storm.[1]

A special interest attaches to Samoa in so far as it is now commonly believed to be the original seat of the Polynesian race in the Pacific, from which their ancestors gradually dispersed to the other islands of that vast ocean, where their descendants are settled to this day. Polynesian traditions point to such a dispersal from Samoa as a centre, and they are confirmed by the name which the various branches of the race give to their old ancestral home. The

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 72; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 72; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 504; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 38-41.

original form of that name appears to have been Savaiki, which through dialectical variations has been altered to Hawaiki in New Zealand, to Hawaii in the Sandwich Islands, to Havaii in Tahiti, to Havaiki in the Marquesas, and to Avaiki in Rarotonga. In the Samoan dialect, which of all the Polynesian dialects alone retains the letter S, the word presumably appears as Savaii, the name of the largest island of the group, which accordingly may be regarded, with some probability, as the cradle-land of the Polynesians in the Pacific; though native traditions indicate rather Upolu or Manua as the place from which the canoes started on their long and adventurous voyages. On the other hand in favour of Savaii it has been pointed out that the island holds a decided superiority over the other islands of the group in respect of canoe-building; for it possesses extensive forests of hard and durable timber, which is much sought after for the keels and other parts of vessels; indeed, the large sea-going canoes were generally, if not always, built on Savaii, and maritime expeditions appear sometimes to have started from its shores.[1] In proof that the Samoans have long been settled in the islands which they now occupy, it may be alleged that they appear to have no tradition of any other home from which their ancestors migrated to their present abode. With the single exception of a large village called Matautu in Savaii, the inhabitants of which claim that they came originally from Fiji, all the Samoans consider themselves indigenous.[2] The Samoans and Tongans, says Mr. S. Percy Smith, "formed part of the first migration into

[1] Horatio Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition* (Philadelphia, 1846), pp. 119 *sqq.*; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, pp. 102 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 271 *sqq.* (compare *id.* p. 34 as to the timber and canoe-building of Savaii); G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 358, 371 *sq.*; A. C. Haddon, *The Wanderings of Peoples* (Cambridge, 1919), p. 36; A. H. Keane, *Man Past and Present* (Cambridge, 1920), p. 552. That the Samoan language, alone of the Polynesian dialects, retains the S sound, is affirmed by Ch. Wilkes (*Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 123). In some of the islands the name of the ancient fatherland of the race (Hawaiki, etc.) has been applied or transferred to the spirit-land to which the souls of the dead are supposed to pass as their final abode. See S. Percy Smith, *Hawaiki*, pp. 46 *sqq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 56 *sqq.*, *s.v.* "Hawaiki."

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 360 *sq.* As to the Fijian colony in Savaii, compare T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), pp. 117 *sq.*

the Pacific, and they have been there so long that they have forgotten their early history. All the numerous legends as to their origin seem to express their own belief in their being autochthones, created in the Samoan Islands."[1]

§ 2. *The Samoan Islanders, their character*

In spite of the many diseases prevalent among them, the Samoans are commonly reckoned among the finest, as well as the purest, specimens of the Polynesian race. Like the Tongans, whom they closely resemble, they are generally tall and shapely, with full rounded faces and limbs, but without that grossness and laxity of fibre common in the Tahitians. The average height of the men is said to be five feet ten inches, but some of them are over six feet with the thews and sinews of a Hercules. Their features, though not always regular, are commonly pleasing; and in particular the forehead is remarkable for its ample development, which, with the breadth between the eyes, gives to the countenance an expression of nobleness and dignity. Some of the young men especially are models of manly beauty; we read of one who, having decked his hair with the flowers of the scarlet hibiscus, might have sat for an Antinous. The women are comely enough, but strikingly inferior to the men in point of personal beauty. The prevailing colour is a light copper or olive brown, but the shade varies a good deal, deepening somewhat in fishermen and others who are much exposed to the sun; but it never approaches the dark chocolate tint, or Vandyke brown, of the Melanesians. Their hair is usually black and wavy, sometimes curly; but hardly a vestige is to be seen among them of the crisped and woolly hair and dusky complexion of the Melanesians, their neighbours on the west.[1]

The prepossessing appearance of the Samoans on the

[1] S. Percy Smith, *Hawaiki*, pp. 114 *sq.*

[2] Horatio Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, pp. 10 *sq.*; Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 125 *sq.*; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, pp. 41, 51; C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans* (Leipzig, 1875-1876), ii. 110 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 3; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 58; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 55 *sq.*

whole does not belie their character. They are reputed to be the most refined and civilised of all the native races of the Pacific, and this superiority is said to manifest itself in their social and domestic life.[1] The Samoans, we are told, are a nation of gentlemen and contrast most favourably with the generality of the Europeans who come among them.[2] They are said to carry their habits of cleanliness and decency to a higher point than the most fastidious of civilised nations;[3] and the Samoan women appear to be honourably distinguished by their modest behaviour and fidelity in marriage, qualities which contrast with the profligacy of their sex in other branches of the Polynesian race.[4] Equally honourable to the men are the respect and kindness which, according to the testimony of observers, they pay to their women, whom they are said to regard as their equals.[5] The aged were treated with respect and never abandoned; and strangers were always received in the best house and provided with food specially prepared for them.[6] Infanticide, which was carried to an appalling and almost incredible extent among some of the Polynesians,[7] was unknown in Samoa; abortion, indeed, was not uncommon, but once born children were affectionately cared for and never killed or exposed.[8] Wives and slaves were never put to death at a

[1] S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 634.

[2] T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), pp. 59 *sq.*

[3] J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* p. 110.

[4] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 125; J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* p. 110.

[5] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 148; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 156; J. L. Brenchley, *op. cit.* p. 77; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 628 *sq.*; G. Brown, *op. cit.* pp. 43, 410.

[6] G. Brown, *op. cit.* p. 410.

[7] For some evidence of the practice see John Turnbull, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1813), pp. 363 *sq.*; C. S. Stewart, *Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands* (London, 1828), pp. 251 *sqq.*; P. Dillon, *Voyage in the South Seas* (London, 1829), ii. 134; William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, Second Edition (London, 1832–1836), i. 248 *sqq.*; J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (London, 1838), pp. 479-486. According to Stewart, in those parts of Hawaii to which the influence of the missionaries had not penetrated, two-thirds of the infants born were murdered by their parents within the age of two years. In Tahiti three women, questioned by Mr. Williams, acknowledged that they had killed twenty-one of their children between them. Another, at the point of death, confessed to him, in an anguish of remorse, that she had destroyed sixteen of her children.

[8] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 79. Compare J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 479; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 621; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 47.

chief's burial, that their souls might attend their dead lord to the spirit land,[1] as was the practice in some of the other islands, even in Tonga. Again, human sacrifices were not offered by the Samoans to the gods within the time during which the islands have been under the observation of Europeans; but in some of the more remote traditions mention is made of such sacrifices offered to the sun. Thus it is said that in the mythical island of Papatea, somewhere away in the east, the sun used to call for two victims every day, one at his rising and another at his setting. This lasted for eighty days. At such a rate of consumption the population of the island was rapidly wasting away. To escape the threatened doom, a brother and sister, named Luama and Ui, fled from Papatea to Manua, the most easterly of the Samoan islands, but they found to their consternation that there too, the sun was demanding his daily victims. Every house had to supply a victim in succession, and, when all had yielded the tribute, it came to the first house in turn to renew the sacrifice. The victim was laid out on a pandanus tree, and there the sun devoured him or her. When the lot fell on Luama, his heroic sister Ui insisted on taking his place, and lying down, she cried, "O cruel sun! come and eat your victim, we are all being devoured by you." But the amorous sun fell in love with her and took her to wife, at the same time putting an end to the human sacrifices. Another story affirms that the heroine was a daughter of the King of Manua, and that he yielded her up as an offering to the sun in order to end the sacrifices by making her the saviour of the people.[2]

The Samoans, when they became known to Europe in the nineteenth century, did not habitually indulge in cannibalism; indeed, according to John Williams, one of the earliest missionaries to the islands, they spoke of the practice with great horror and detestation.[3] But we have the testimony of other early missionaries that in their wars

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 219.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 201 *sq.* Compare G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 230 *sq.*; J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 471; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 210.

[3] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 456.

they occasionally resorted to it as a climax of hatred and revenge, devouring some portion of an enemy who had rendered himself peculiarly obnoxious by his cruelty or his provocations. Traditions, too, are on record of chiefs who habitually killed and devoured their fellow-creatures. A form of submission which a conquered party used to adopt towards their conquerors has also been interpreted as a relic of an old custom of cannibalism. Representatives of the vanquished party used to bow down before the victors, each holding in his hands a piece of firewood and a bundle of leaves, such as are used in dressing a pig for the oven. This was as much as to say, "Kill us and cook us, if you please." Criminals, too, were sometimes bound hand and foot, slung on a pole, and laid down before the persons they had injured, like pigs about to be killed and cooked. Combining these and other indications we may surmise that cannibalism was formerly not infrequent among the ancestors of the Samoans, though among their descendants in the nineteenth century the practice had almost wholly died out.[1] It is further to the credit of the Samoans that their public administration of justice was on the whole mild and humane. Torture was never employed to wring the truth from witnesses or the accused, and there seems to be only a single case on record of capital punishment inflicted by judicial sentence. At the same time private individuals were free to avenge the adultery of a wife or the murder of a kinsman by killing the culprit, and no blame attached to them for so doing. The penalties imposed by the sentence of a court or judicial assembly (*fono*) included fines, banishment, and the destruction of houses, fruit-trees, and domestic animals. But a criminal might also be condemned by a court to suffer corporal punishment in one form or another. He might, for example, be obliged to wound himself by beating his head and chest with a stone till the blood flowed freely; if he seemed to spare himself, he would be ordered by the assembled chiefs to strike

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 108-111; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 149 *sq.*, 290; J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* pp. 39, 101 *sq.*; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences* (London, 1866), pp. 125 *sq.*; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 168; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 240 *sq.*

harder, and if he still faltered, the prompt and unsparing application of a war club to his person effectually assisted the execution of the sentence. Again, he might be condemned to bite a certain acrid and poisonous root (called in the native language *tevi*), which caused the mouth to swell and the culprit to suffer intense agony for a considerable time afterwards. Or he might have to throw up a spiny and poisonous fish into the air and to catch it in his naked hand as it fell; the sharp-pointed spines entered into the flesh and inflicted acute pain and suffering. Or he might be suspended by hands and feet from a pole and in this attitude exposed to the broiling sun for many hours together; or he might be hung by the feet, head downward, from the top of a tall coco-nut tree and left there to expiate his crime for a long time. For certain offences the culprit was condemned to have his nose tattooed or his ears split. In sentences of banishment the term of exile was never specified, but when the sentence had been pronounced in full assembly, and the offence was great, the culprit might live in exile for years. When the punishment consisted in the destruction of houses, plantations, and live stock, it was immediately inflicted by the whole force of the district, under the direction and superintendence of the leading men, who had taken part in the assembly and passed the sentence. A whole family might suffer in this way for the offence of one of its members, and be driven into exile, after witnessing the burning of their house, the killing of their pigs, and the barking of their bread-fruit trees.[1] If such penalties seem to us in some cases needlessly severe, they at least testify to a strong sense of public justice developed among the Samoans, who had thus advanced far enough to transfer, in some measure, the redress of wrongs to judicial assemblies instead of leaving it to the caprice of the injured individuals. Nevertheless the transference was but imperfect: the administration of justice was loose and irregular: for the most part every man was a law to himself, and did what was right in his own eyes. An aggrieved party would become his own judge, jury, and

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 91 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 288-291. Compare Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) pp. 119, 120.

executioner. The thirst for vengeance was slaked only by the blood of a victim.[1]

It is another sign of the intellectual enlightenment of the Samoans that they rose apparently superior to that system of malignant magic, which kept their neighbours the Melanesians in lifelong bondage. The experienced missionary, Dr. George Brown, could not find in Samoa any trace of the practice of that particular form of the black art with which he was familiar in New Britain and other Melanesian islands, the practice of procuring some object which has belonged to an enemy or been touched by him, and taking it to a sorcerer, that he may perform over it a ceremony for the purpose of injuring the person from whom the object has been obtained. The proceeding is one of the commonest forms of sympathetic magic, but the Samoans appear to have ignored or despised it.[2] Again, the silence of our authorities on the subject of amulets and talismans leaves us to infer that the Samoans were equally indifferent to that branch of magic which seeks to ensure the safety and prosperity of the individual by attaching a miscellaneous collection of rubbish to his person, a system of ensurance against evil and misfortune which has attained a prodigious development among some savages, notably in Africa,[3] and is very far from being unknown in Europe at the present day. Again, unlike most savages, the Samoans were close observers of the stars, not only reckoning the time of night by the rising of particular stars, but steering by them when they were out of sight of land.[4]

Against these amiable and enlightened traits in the Samoan character must be set their cruelty in war. If they opened hostilities with a great deal of formal politeness, they conducted them with great ferocity. No quarter was given to men in battle, and captives were ruthlessly slaughtered. Women were sometimes spared for the use of their captors. Nor did death save the conquered from

[1] S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 633.

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 245. Compare S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 638.

[3] See, for example, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1920), i. 252 *sqq.*

[4] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 348.

the insults and outrages of the insolent victors. The slain on the battlefield were treated with great indignity. Their heads were cut off and carried in triumph to the village, where they were piled up in a heap in the place of public assembly, the head of the most important chief being given the place of honour on the top of the pile. However, they were not kept as trophies, but after remaining for some hours exposed to public gaze were either claimed by the relatives or buried on the spot. The headless trunks were given to children to drag about the village and to spear, stone, or mutilate at pleasure.[1] The first missionary to Samoa was told in Manua that the victors used to scalp their victims and present the scalps, with kava, either to the king or to the relatives of the slain in battle, by whom these gory trophies were highly prized. He mentions as an example the case of a young woman, whose father had been killed. A scalp of a foe having been brought to her, she burnt it, strewed the ashes on the fire with which she cooked her food, and then devoured the meat with savage satisfaction.[2] But the climax of cruelty and horror was reached in a great war which the people of A'ana, in Upolu, waged against a powerful combination of enemies. After a brave resistance they were at last defeated, and the surviving warriors, together with the aged and infirm, the women and children, fled to the mountains, where they endeavoured to hide themselves from their pursuers in the caves and the depths of the forest. But they were hunted out and brought down to the seashore; and an immense pit having been dug and filled with firewood, they were all, men, women, and children, thrown into it and burnt alive. The dreadful butchery went on for days. Four hundred victims are said to have perished. The massacre was perpetrated at the moment when the first missionaries were landing in Samoa. From the opposite shore they beheld the mountains enveloped in the flames and smoke of the funeral pile. The decisive battle had

[1] J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 456; Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 150 *sq.*; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, p. 61; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 247 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 170, 172 *sq.* Dr. Brown here speaks as if captive women were regularly spared and married by the victors. As to the elaborate civilities which passed between the vanguards of two hostile armies at their first meeting, see Dr. Brown, *op. cit.* pp. 166 *sq.*

[2] J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 458.

been fought that very morning. For many years a great black circle of charcoal marked the scene and preserved the memory of the fatal transaction.[1]

§ 3. *Houses, Agriculture, and Industries*

Like all the Polynesians, the Samoans are not nomadic, but live in settled villages. The typical Samoan house is commonly described as oval or elliptical, though in fact it would seem to be of oblong shape with semicircular ends. But many houses were circular in shape, and with their conical thatched roofs resembled gigantic beehives. From the Tongans the Samoans also borrowed the custom of building oblong quadrangular houses, which were called *afolau*. The best houses, in particular those of important chiefs, were built on raised platforms of stones about three feet high. One of the circular houses would measure about thirty-five feet in diameter by a hundred in circumference. Two or three posts in the centre of the house, some twenty feet high, supported the roof, the lower end of which rested on a series of short posts, four or five feet high, placed at intervals of about four feet all round the house. The intervals between these posts were sometimes closed by thatch neatly tied to sticks, which were planted upright in the ground and fastened to the eaves; but more commonly, it would seem, the intervals between the posts were left open and only closed at night by blinds made of coco-nut leaves, which could be let down or pulled up like Venetian blinds. During the day these blinds were drawn up, so that there was a free current of air all through the house. The roofs of the best houses were made of bread-fruit wood carefully thatched with leaves of the wild sugar-cane; when well made, the thatch might last seven years. The circular roofs were so constructed that they could be lifted clean off the posts and removed anywhere, either by land or on a raft of canoes. The whole house could also be transported; and as Samoan houses were often bartered, or given as presents, or paid as fines, it frequently happened that they were removed from place to place. In the whole house

[1] J. Williams, *op. cit.* pp. 286 *sq.*, 456; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 254-258.

there was not a single nail or spike: all joints were made by exactly corresponding notches and secured by cinnet, that is cordage made from the dried fibre of the coco-nut husk. The timber of the best houses was the wood of the bread-fruit tree; and, if protected against damp, it would last fifty years. The floor of the house was composed of stones, overlaid with fine gravel and sand. In the centre of the floor was the fire-place, a circular hollow two or three feet in diameter and a few inches deep, lined with hardened clay. It was not used for cooking, but for the purpose of lighting up the house by night. The cooking was never done in the house, but always in the open air outside on an oven of hot stones. An ordinary Samoan house consisted of a single apartment, which served as the common parlour, dining-room, and bedroom of the family. But at night small tents made of bark-cloth were hung from the ridge-pole, and under them the various members of the family slept separately, the tents serving them at the same time as curtains to protect them against the mosquitoes. Formerly, the houses of the principal chiefs were surrounded with two fences; the outer of the two was formed of strong posts and had a narrow zigzag entrance, several yards long, leading to an opening in the inner fence, which was made of reeds. But with the advent of a more peaceful epoch these fortified enclosures for the most part disappeared. Houses constructed on the Tongan model were often very substantially built: a double row of posts and cross-beams supported the roof. These houses were found better able to resist the high winds which prevail at one season of the year.[1]

Like the rest of the Polynesians, the Samoans are an agricultural people, and subsist mainly by the fruits of the earth, though the lagoons and reefs furnish them with a large supply of fish and shell-fish, of which they are very fond. They all, but especially persons of rank, occasionally

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 145 *sqq.*; J. E. Erskine, *op. cit.* pp. 45-47; T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), p. 32; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 135; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 152 *sqq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 634 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 105 *sqq.*, 153 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 24 *sqq.*

regaled themselves on pigs, fowls, and turtle. But bread-fruit, taro, yams, bananas, and coco-nuts formed the staff of life in Samoa. As the soil is very rich and the hot, damp climate is eminently favourable to the growth of vegetation, food was always abundant, and the natives could procure the necessaries and even the luxuries of life at the cost of very little labour; if they tilled the soil, it was rather to vary their diet than to wring a scanty subsistence from a niggardly nature. Coco-nut palms, bread-fruit and chestnut trees, and wild yams, bananas, and plantains abound throughout the islands, and require little attention to make them yield an ample crop. For about half the year the Samoans have a plentiful supply of food from the bread-fruit trees: during the other half they depend principally upon their taro plantations. While the bread-fruit is in season, every family lays up a quantity of the ripe fruit in a pit lined with leaves and covered with stones. The fruit soon ferments and forms a soft mass, which emits a very vile smell every time the pit is opened. In this state it may be kept for years, for the older and more rotten the fruit is, the better the natives like it. They bake it, with the juice of the coco-nut, into flat cakes, which are eaten when the ripe fruit is out of season or when taro is scarce. For taro is on the whole the staple food of the Samoans; it grows all the year round. The water of the coco-nut furnishes a cool, delicious, slightly effervescing beverage, which is peculiarly welcome to the hot and weary wayfarer far from any spring or rivulet.[1]

To obtain land for cultivation the Samoans went into the forest and cut down the brushwood and creeping vines with small hatchets or large knives. The large forest-trees they destroyed by chopping away the bark in a circle round the trunk and then kindling a fire of brushwood at the foot of the tree. Thus in the course of a few days a fair-sized piece of ground would be cleared, nothing of the forest

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 147; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences* (London, 1866), pp. 126-128; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) pp. 87 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 105-107; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 53-55; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 130 *sqq.* According to Dr. Brown, there are generally three crops of bread-fruit in the year, one of them lasting about three months.

remaining but charred trunks and leafless branches. Then followed the planting. The agricultural instruments employed were of the simplest pattern. A dibble, or pointed stick of hard wood, was used to make the hole in which the plant was deposited. This took the place of a plough, and a branch served the purpose of a harrow. Sometimes the earth was dug and smoothed with the blade of a canoe paddle. The labour of clearing and planting the ground was done by the men, but the task of weeding it generally devolved on the women. The first crop taken from a piece of land newly cleared in the forest was yams, which require a peculiar culture and frequent change of site, two successive crops being seldom obtained from the same land. After the first crop of yams had been cleared off, taro was planted several times in succession; for this root does not, like yams, require a change of site. However, we are told that a second crop of taro grown on the same land was very inferior to the first, and that as a rule the land was allowed to remain fallow until the trees growing on it were as thick as a man's arm, when it was again cleared for cultivation. In the wet season taro was planted on the high land from one to four miles inland from the village; other kinds of taro were planted in the swamps, and these were considered more succulent than the taro grown on the uplands. The growing crops of taro were weeded at least twice a year. The natives resorted to irrigation, when they had the means; and they often dug trenches to drain away the water from swampy ground. Yams also required attention; for sticks had to be provided on which the plants could run. The fruit ripens only once a year, but it was stored up, and with care would keep till the next season. The natives found neither yams nor bread-fruit so nourishing as taro.[1]

The degree of progress which any particular community has made in civilisation may be fairly gauged by the degree of subdivision of labour among its members; for it is only by restricting his energies to a particular craft that a man can attain to any perfection in it. Judged by this standard

[1] Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 188; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 635; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 54 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 130 *sqq.*, 338 *sqq.*

the Samoans had advanced some way on the road to civilisation, since among them the division of labour was carried out to a considerable extent: in their native state they had not a few separate trades or professions, some of which may even be said to have developed the stability and organisation of trade guilds. Among them, for example, house-building, canoe-building, tattooing, and the making of nets and fish-hooks were distinct crafts, which, though not strictly hereditary, were usually confined to particular families. Thus by long practice and experience handed down from generation to generation a considerable degree of skill was acquired, and a considerable degree of reputation accrued to the family. Every trade had its particular patron god and was governed by certain well-known rules. The members formed, indeed, we are told, a trade union which was remarkably effective. Thus they had rules which prescribed the time and proportions of payment to be made at different stages of the work, and these rules were strictly observed and enforced by the workmen. For example, in the house-building trade, it was a standing custom that after the sides and one end of a house were finished, the principal part of the payment should be made. If the carpenters were dissatisfied with the amount of payment, they simply left off work and walked away, leaving the house unfinished, and no carpenter in the whole length and breadth of Samoa would dare to finish it, for it would have been as much as his business or even his life was worth to undertake the job. Anyone so foolhardy as thus to set the rules of the trade at defiance would have been attacked by the other workmen and robbed of his tools; at the best he would receive a severe thrashing, at the worst he might be killed. A house might thus stand unfinished for months or even years. Sooner or later, if he was to have a roof over his head, the unfortunate owner had to yield to the trade union and agree to such terms as they might dictate. If it happened that the house was almost finished before the fourth and final payment was made, and the builder at that stage of the proceedings took offence, he would remove a beam from the roof before retiring in dudgeon, and no workman would dare to replace it. The

rules in the other trades, such as canoe-building and tattooing, were practically the same. In canoe-building, for example, five separate payments were made to the builders at five stages of the work; and if at any stage the workmen were dissatisfied with the pay, they very unceremoniously abandoned the work until the employer apologised or came to terms. No other party of workmen would have the temerity to finish the abandoned canoe upon pain of bringing down on their heads the wrath of the whole fraternity of canoe-builders; any such rash offenders against the rules of the guild would be robbed of their tools, expelled from their clan, and prohibited from exercising their calling during the pleasure of the guild. Such strides had the Samoans made in the direction of trade unionism.[1]

In addition to their household duties women engaged in special work of their own, particularly in the manufacture of bark-cloths and of fine mats; but among them there seems to have been no subdivision of labour and consequently no professional guilds. In all families the making of bark-cloth and mats was carried on by the women indifferently, though some no doubt excelled others in the skill of their handiwork. The cloth was made from the bark of the paper-mulberry (*Morus papyrifera*), which was beaten out on boards with a grooved beetle. The sound of these beetles ringing on the boards, though not very musical, was a familiar sound in a Samoan village. The fine mats, on the manufacture of which the Samoans particularly prided themselves, were worn as dresses on ceremonial occasions. They were made from the leaves of a large plant which the natives call *lau ie*; the leaves closely resemble those of the pandanus, but are larger. These mats were of a straw or cream colour, and were sometimes fringed with tufts of scarlet feathers of the paroquet. They were thin and almost as flexible as calico. Many months, sometimes even years, were spent over the making of a single mat. Another kind of fine mat was made from the bark of a plant of the nettle tribe (*Hibiscus*

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 157 *sqq.*, 162 *sqq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 141 *sqq.*, 145 *sqq.*, 153 *sqq.*, 157 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 268, 305-308. Compare Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 143 *sqq.*; Violette, *op. cit.* pp. 134 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 635 *sq.*

tiliaceus), which grows wild over the islands. Mats of the latter sort were shaggy on one side, and, being bleached white, resembled fleecy sheep-skins. These fine mats, especially those made from the leaves of the pandanus-like plant, were considered by the Samoans to be their most valuable property; they were handed down as heir-looms from father to son, and were so much coveted that wars were sometimes waged to obtain possession of them. The pedigrees of the more famous mats, particularly those fringed with red feathers, were carefully kept, and when they changed hands, their history was related with solemn precision. Age enhanced their value; and their tattered condition, deemed a proof of antiquity, rather added to than detracted from the estimation in which they were held. The wealth of a family consisted of its mats; with them it remunerated the services of carpenters, boat-builders, and tattooers. The mats formed, indeed, a sort of currency or medium of exchange; for while the Samoans were not in general a trading people, and there was little or no actual buying and selling among them, there was nevertheless a considerable exchange of property on many occasions; at marriage, for example, it was customary for the bride's family to give mats and bark-cloth as her dowry, while the bridegroom's family provided a house, canoes, and other articles. But though the fine mats were thus paid away or given in exchange, they had no fixed negotiable value, and thus did not serve the purpose of money.[1]

§ 4. *Rights of Property*

In Samoa the rights of private property, both personal and landed, were fully recognised, but with certain limitations. The lands were owned alike by chiefs and by heads

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 142 *sq.*; J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, pp. 109 *sq.*; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 129-132; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 135; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 119-121; S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 636; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 143 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 304 *sq.*, 305, 315, 434.

of families; the laws regulating their possession were very definite. In no case did the whole of the land belong to the chiefs. Every family owned portions of land not only in the village and adjoining gardens, but far away in the unreclaimed forests of the interior. The title, which passed by inheritance, generally vested in the family; but the family was represented by the head, who often claimed the right to dispose of it by sale or otherwise. Yet he dared not do anything without consulting all concerned; were he to persist in thwarting the wishes of the rest, they would take his title from him and give it to another. Sometimes, however, the title to landed property vested in individual owners. The legitimate heir was the oldest surviving brother, but occasionally he waived his right in favour of one of the sons. Women might hold land when the male side of a family was extinct. The boundaries of land were well defined, being marked by pathways, natural limits, such as a river, or by trenches and stones half buried in the ground. Every inch of ground had its owner, even to the tops of the mountains. Trespass by a neighbouring village would be resisted, if necessary, by force of arms.[1]

In regard to personal property it may be said that, like landed property, it belonged rather to the family than to the individual; for no Samoan could refuse to give, without an equivalent, anything which any member of his family asked for. In this way boats, tools, garments, and so forth passed freely from hand to hand. Nay, a man could enter the plantation of a relative and help himself to the fruit without asking the owner's leave; such an appropriation was not considered to be stealing. Under this communistic system, as it has been called, accumulation of property was scarcely possible, and industry was discouraged. Why should a diligent man toil when he knew that the fruit of his labour might all be consumed by lazy kinsfolk? He might lay out a plantation of bananas, and when they were full-grown, bunch after bunch might be plucked and eaten by his less industrious relations, until, exasperated

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 176 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 83 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 287 *sq.*, 314, 339.

beyond endurance, the unfortunate owner would cut down all the remaining trees. No matter how hard a man worked, he could not keep his earnings; they all soon passed out of his hands into the common stock of the clan. The system, we are told, ate like a canker-worm at the roots of individual and national progress.[1]

§ 5. *Government, Social Ranks, Respect for Chiefs*

The native government of Samoa was not, like that of Tonga, a centralised despotism. Under the form of a monarchy and aristocracy the political constitution was fundamentally republican and indeed democratic. The authority of the king and chiefs was limited and more or less nominal; practically Samoa consisted of a large number of petty independent and self-governing communities, which sometimes combined for defence or common action in a sort of loose federation.[2]

To a superficial observer the aristocratic cast of Samoan society might at first sight seem very marked. The social ranks were sharply divided from each other, and the inferior orders paid great formal deference to their superiors. At the head of all ranked the chiefs (*alii*); but even among them the ordinary chiefs were distinct from the sacred chiefs (*alii paia*), who enjoyed the highest honours. These sacred chiefs preserved their pedigrees for twenty or more generations with as great care as the oldest and proudest families in Europe, and they possessed many feudal rights and privileges which were as well known and as fully acknowledged as are, or were, those of any lord of a manor in England. The task of preserving a record of a chief's pedigrees was entrusted to his orator or spokesman, who

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 160 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 247, 262 *sq.*, 434.

[2] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 454; H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 29; T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific* (Edinburgh, 1863), p. 118; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 173; S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 631; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 83 *sq.*, 89; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 333.

belonged to a lower social rank (that of the *tulafales*).[1] The influence of chiefs was supported by the belief that they possessed some magical or supernatural power, by which they could enforce their decisions.[2] Their persons were sacred or taboo. They might not be touched by any one. No one might sit beside them. In the public assemblies a vacant place was left on each side of the seat of honour which they occupied. Some chiefs were so holy that they might not even be looked at by day. Their food might not be handed to them, but was thrown to them, and it was so sacred that no one might eat any of it which they had left over.[3]

"The sacredness attributed to many chiefs of high rank gave rise to observances which were irksome to their families and dependents, since whatever they came in contact with required to undergo the ceremony of *lulu'u*, or sprinkling with a particular kind of cocoanut-water (*niu-ui*); both to remove the sanctity supposed to be communicated to the article or place that had touched the chief, and also to counteract the danger of speedy death, which was believed to be imminent to any person who might touch the sacred chief, or anything that he had touched; so great was the mantle of sanctity thrown around these chiefs, although unconnected with the priesthood. Thus the spot where such a chief had sat or slept was sprinkled with water immediately he had left it, as were also the persons who had sat on either side of him when he received company, as well as all the attendants who had waited upon him.

"This remarkable custom was also observed on other occasions. It was always used on the occasion of deposing a chief, and depriving him of his *Ao*, or titles, in which case the ceremony was performed by some of those who had either conferred the titles or had the power to do so. In the case of O le Tamafainga, the usurper who was killed

[1] H. Hale, *op. cit.* p. 28; Violette, *op. cit.* p. 168; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 173 *sqq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 65 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 283, 430.

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 431.

[3] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 280, 283, 285; Violette, *op. cit.* p. 168 (as to chiefs too holy to be seen by day).

in A'ana in 1829, his body was first sprinkled with cocoanut-water, and his title of *O le Tuia'ana* recalled from him, before he was hewn in pieces. The ceremony consisted of sprinkling the body with cocoanut-water, and the officiating chief or *Tulafale* saying, 'Give us back our *Ao*,' by which means the title was recalled, and the sacredness attaching to it was dispelled. It was also used over persons newly tattooed, and upon those who contaminated themselves by contact with a dead body. In each of these cases the ceremony was carefully observed, and reverently attended to, as very dire consequences were considered certain to follow its omission."[1] Thus the sacredness of a chief was deemed dangerous to all persons with whom he might come, whether directly or indirectly, into contact; it was apparently conceived as a sort of electric fluid which discharged itself, it might be with fatal effect, on whatever it touched. And the sacredness of a chief was clearly classed with the uncleanness of a dead body, since contact with a dead body involved the same dangerous consequences as contact with the sacred person of a chief and had to be remedied in precisely the same manner. The two conceptions of holiness and uncleanness, which to us seem opposite and even contradictory, blend in the idea of taboo, in which both are implicitly held as it were in solution. It requires the analytic tendency of more advanced thought to distinguish the two conceptions, to precipitate, as it were, the components of the solution in the testing-tube of the mind.

The profound respect which the Samoans entertained for their chiefs manifested itself in yet another fashion. A special form of speech was adopted in addressing a chief, in conversing in his presence, or even in alluding to him in his absence. Thus there arose what is called a chiefs' language, or polite diction, which was used exclusively in speaking to or of a chief, whether the speaker was a common man or a

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 127 *sq.* Compare Violette, *op. cit.* p. 168; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 231, 280, 285. In this work Dr. Brown remarks (p. 231) that there is no clear explanation of the custom of sprinkling coco-nut water as a purificatory rite. But the explanation given by Stair, which I have quoted in the text, is clear and satisfactory, and elsewhere (p. 285) Dr. Brown implicitly adopts the same explanation, where he says that the man who had served kava to a sacred chief "sprinkled himself all over to wash away the sacredness (*paia*)."

chief of lower rank. But it was never used by a chief when he was speaking of himself. Persons of high rank, in addressing others and alluding to themselves, always employed ordinary language and sometimes the very lowest terms; so that it was often amusing to listen to expressions of feigned humility uttered by a proud man, who would have been indignant indeed if the same terms which he applied to himself had been applied to him by others. Thus, for example, the actions of sitting, talking, eating, sleeping, and dying were expressed by different terms according as the agent was a chief or a common man. The ordinary word for a house was *fale*; but a chief's house was called *maota*. The common word for anger was *ita*; the polite term was *toasa*. To sleep in ordinary language was *moe*, but in polite language it was *tofā* or *toá*. To be sick in common speech was *mai*, but in polite language it was *ngasengase*, *faatafa*, *pulu pulusi*. To die was *mate* or *pe* (said of animals), or *oti* (said of men); but the courtly expressions for death were *maliu* ("gone"), *folau* ("gone on a voyage"), *fale-lauasi*, *ngasololo ao*, and a number of others. The terms substituted in the court language sometimes had a meaning the very opposite of that borne by the corresponding terms in the ordinary language. For example, in the court language firewood was called *polata*, which properly means the stem of the banana plant, a wood that is incombustible. If the use of an ordinary word in the presence of a chief were unavoidable, it had to be prefaced by the apologetic phrase *veaeane*, literally "saving your presence," every time the word was spoken. Nay, the courtly language itself varied with the rank of the chief addressed or alluded to. For example, if you wished to say that a person had come, you would say *alu* of a common man; *alala* of a head of a household or landowner (*tulafale*); *maliu* of a petty chief; *susu* of a chief of the second class; and *afiu* of a chief of the highest rank.[1] The same respect which was shown in the use of words descriptive of a chief's

[1] H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, pp. 28 *sq.*; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 190; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 67 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 380 *sq.* Compare G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 175.

actions or possessions was naturally extended to his own name, when he belonged to the class of sacred chiefs. If his name happened to be also the name of a common object, it ceased to be used to designate the thing in question, and a new word or phrase was substituted for it. Henceforth the old name of the object was dropped and might never again be pronounced in the chief's district nor indeed anywhere in his presence. In one district, for example, the chief's name was Flying-fox; hence the ordinary word for flying-fox (*re'a*) was dropped, and that species of bat was known as "bird of heaven" (*manu langi*).[1] Again, when the chief of Pango-pango, in the island of Tutuila, was called Maunga, which means "mountain," that word might never be used in his presence, and a courtly term was substituted for it.[2] This is only one instance of the ways in which the dialects of savages tend to vary from each other under the influence of superstition.

Yet despite the extraordinary deference thus paid to chiefs in outward show, the authority which they possessed was for the most part very limited; indeed in the ordinary affairs of life the powers and privileges of a chief were little more than nominal, and he moved about among the people and shared their everyday employments just like a common man. Thus, for example, he would go out with a fishing party, work in his plantation, help at building a house or a canoe, and even lend a hand in cooking at a native oven. So strong was the democratic spirit among the Samoans. The ordinary duties of a chief consisted in administering the law, settling disputes, punishing transgressors, appointing feasts, imposing taboos, and leading his people in war. It was in time of war that a chief's dignity and authority were at their highest, but even then he could hardly maintain strict discipline.[3] However, the influence of chiefs varied a good deal and depended in great measure on their personal character. If besides his hereditary rank a chief was a man

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 280, 381.

[2] J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, p. 44.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 174 *sq.*; S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, pp. 631 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 70; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 286.

of energy and ability, he might become practically supreme in his village or district. Some chiefs even used their power in a very tyrannical manner.[1]

But for the abuse of power by their nominal rulers the Samoans had a remedy at hand. When a chief rendered himself odious to his people by tyranny and oppression, the householders or gentry (*tulafales*) and neighbouring chiefs would not uncommonly depose him and transfer his office to another; in extreme cases they might banish him or even put him to death. The place of banishment for exiled chiefs was the island of Tutuila. Thither the fallen potentate was conveyed under custody in a canoe, and on landing he was made to run the gauntlet between two rows of the inhabitants, who belaboured him with sticks, pelted him with stones, or subjected him to other indignities. He was lucky if he escaped with nothing worse than bruises, for sometimes the injuries inflicted were severe or actually fatal.[2] Chieftainship was hereditary in the male line, but did not necessarily pass from father to son; the usual heir would seem to have been the eldest surviving brother, and next to him one of the sons. But a dying chief might nominate his successor, though the final decision rested with the heads of families. Failing a male heir, a daughter might be appointed to, or might assume, the prerogative of chieftainship.[3]

In addition to their hereditary nobility chiefs might be raised to higher rank by the possession of titles (*ao*), which were in the gift of certain ruling towns or villages. When four or, according to another account, five of these titles were conferred upon a single chief, he was called *o le tupu*, or King of Samoa. But if the constituencies were not unanimous in their choice of a candidate, the throne might remain vacant for long periods. Thus the monarchy of

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 70; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 286.

[2] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 454; H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 28; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 119; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 177; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 71 *sqq.*

[3] Violette, *op. cit.* p. 119; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 174; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 631; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 282, 286, 430.

Samoa was elective; the king was chosen by a hereditary aristocracy, and his powers were tempered by the rights and privileges of the nobility. Yet under the show of a limited monarchy the constitution was essentially a federal republic.[1] The ceremony of anointing a King of Samoa in ancient times appears to have curiously resembled a similar solemnity in monarchical Europe. It took place in presence of a large assembly of chiefs and people. A sacred stone was consecrated as a throne, or rather stool, on which the king stood, while a priest, who must also be a chief, called upon the gods to behold and bless the king, and pronounced denunciations against such as should fail to obey him. He then poured scented oil from a native bottle over the head, shoulders, and body of the king, and proclaimed his several titles and honours.[2]

Next below the chiefs ranked an inferior order of nobility called *tulafales* or *faipules*, who are variously described as householders, councillors, and secondary chiefs. They formed a very powerful and influential class; indeed we are told that they generally exercised greater authority than the chiefs, and that the real control of districts often centred in their hands. They usually owned large lands: they were the principal advisers of the chiefs: the orators were usually selected from their number: the *ao* or titles of districts were always in their gift; and they had the power, which they did not scruple to use, of deposing and banishing an unpopular chief. Sometimes a chief contrived to bring them into subjection to himself; but as a rule they were a sturdy class, who did not shrink from speaking out their minds to their social superiors, often uttering very unpalatable truths and acting with great determination when the conduct of a chief incurred their displeasure. In short, they made laws, levied fines, and generally ruled the village.[3]

[1] Violette, *op. cit.* pp. 118 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 65 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 283. Compare H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 29.

[2] S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, p. 631.

[3] H. Hale, *op. cit.* p. 28; Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* ii. 152; Violette, *op. cit.* p. 119; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 629; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 70 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 285 *sq.*, 287.

Below the *tulafales* ranked the *faleupolu* or House of Upolu, and the *tangata nuu* or Men of the Land. The former were considerable landowners and possessed much influence; the latter were the humblest class, bearing arms in time of war, and cultivating the soil, fishing, and cooking in time of peace. But they were far from being serfs; most of them were eligible for the position of head of a family, if, when a vacancy occurred, the choice of the family fell upon them.[1] For the title of head of a family was not hereditary. A son might succeed his father in the dignity; but the members of the family would sometimes pass over the son and confer the title on an uncle, a cousin, or even a perfect stranger, if they desired to increase the numerical strength of the family.[2]

The villages of the Samoans were practically self-governing and independent communities, though every village was more or less loosely federated with the other villages of its district. Each district or confederation of villages had its capital (*laumua*) or ruling town. These federal capitals, however, possessed no absolute authority over the other villages of the district; and though great respect was always shown to them, the people of the district, or even of a particular village, would often dissent from the decisions of the capital and assert their independence of action.[3] Of this independence a notable instance occurred when the Catholic missionaries first settled in Samoa. Under the influence of the Protestant missionaries a federal assembly had passed a decree strictly forbidding the admission of Roman Catholics to the islands, and threatening with war any community that should dare to harbour the obnoxious sect. The better to enforce the decree, prayers were publicly offered up in the chapels that God would be pleased to keep all Papists out of Samoa. To these charitable petitions the deity seems to have turned a deaf ear; for, in spite of prayers and prohibitions, two Catholic priests and a lay brother landed and were hospitably received and effectually protected by the people of a village,

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 74 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 432.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 173.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 180; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 333.

who paid no heed either to the remonstrances of the chiefs or to the thunders of the federal assembly.[1]

The population of a village might be from two to five hundred persons, and there might be eight or ten villages in a district. Throughout the Samoan islands there were in all eight of these separate districts. The union of the villages in a district was voluntary; they formed by common consent a petty state for their mutual protection. When war was threatened by another district, no single village acted alone; the whole district, or state, assembled at their capital and held a special parliament to concert the measures to be taken.[2] The boundaries of the districts were well known and zealously guarded, if necessary, by force of arms against the aggression of a neighbouring state. The wardenship of the marches was committed to the two nearest villages on either side, the inhabitants of which were called Boundary-Keepers. Between two such villages in former days mutual ill-feeling constantly existed and border feuds were frequent.[3]

The form of government both of the village and of the district was parliamentary. Affairs were discussed and settled in a representative assembly (*fono*), composed of the leading men of each village or district. These representatives included the chiefs, together with the householders or landowners (*tulafales*) and the inferior gentry (the *faleupolu*). The more weighty affairs, such as declaring war or making peace, or any matters of importance which concerned the whole district, were debated in the general parliament of the district, while business of purely local interest was transacted in the parliament of the village. It was the privilege of the capital to convene the district parliament, to preside over its deliberations, to settle disputed points, to sum up the proceedings, and to dismiss the assembly. These meetings were usually conducted with much formality and decorum. They were always held in the large public place (*malae* or *marae*) of the village or town. It was an open green spot

[1] Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) pp. 119 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 173, 180 *sq.* A third local division, intermediate between the village and the district, is mentioned by Stair, who calls it a settlement (*Old Samoa*, p. 83); but the other authorities whom I have consulted appear not to recognise such an intermediate division.

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 83.

surrounded by a circle of trees and houses. The centre was occupied by a large house which belonged to the chief and was set apart as a caravansary for the entertainment of strangers and visitors. Members of all the three orders which composed the parliament had the right to address it; but the speaking was usually left to the householders or landowners (*tulafales*). Each chief had generally attached to him one of that order who acted as his mouthpiece; and in like manner each settlement retained the services of a member of the order, who was the leading orator of the district. Decisions were reached not by voting but by general consent, the discussion being prolonged until some conclusion, satisfactory to the greater part of the members, and particularly to the most influential, was arrived at. One of the principal prerogatives of the king seems to have been that of convoking a parliament; though, if he refused to do so, when circumstances seemed to require it, the assembly would undoubtedly have met without him. The functions of these assemblies were judicial as well as legislative and deliberative. Offenders were arraigned before them and, if found guilty, were condemned and punished.[1]

It says much for the natural ability of the Samoans that they should have attained to a level of culture so comparatively high with material resources so scanty and defective. Nature, indeed, supplied them with abundance of food and timber, but she denied them the metals, which were unknown in the islands until they were introduced from Europe. In their native state, accordingly, the Samoans were still in the Stone Age, their principal tools being stone axes and adzes, made mainly from a close-grained basalt which is found in the island of Tutuila. Of these axes the rougher were chipped, but the finer were ground. Shells were used as cutting instruments and as punches to bore holes in planks; and combs, neatly carved out of bone, were employed as instruments in tattooing. A wooden

[1] H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 29; Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 153 *sq.*; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 119; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 177 *sqq.*, 180 *sqq.*; S. Ella, *op cit.* pp. 632 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 84 *sqq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 286 *sq.*, 288 *sqq.*

dibble served them instead of a plough to turn up the earth. The only skins they prepared were those of sharks and some other fish, which they used as rasps for smoothing wood-work. The art of pottery was unknown.[1] Food was cooked in ovens of hot stones;[2] fire was kindled by the friction of wood, the method adopted being what is called the stick-and-groove process.[3]

We now pass to a consideration of the religion of these interesting people, especially in regard to the human soul and its destiny after death.

§ 6. *Religion: Gods of Families, Villages, and Districts*

The first missionary to Samoa, John Williams, was struck by the contrast between the religion of the Samoans and the religion of the other Polynesian peoples whom he had studied. "The religious system of the Samoans," he says, "differs essentially from that which obtained at the Tahitian, Society, and other islands with which we are acquainted. They have neither *maraes*, nor temples, nor altars, nor offerings; and, consequently, none of the barbarous and sanguinary rites observed at the other groups. In consequence of this, the Samoans were considered an impious race, and their impiety became proverbial with the people of Rarotonga; for, when upbraiding a person who neglected the worship of the gods, they would call him 'a godless Samoan.' But, although heathenism was presented to us by the Samoans in a dress different from that in which we had been accustomed to see it, having no altars stained with human blood, no *maraes* strewed with the skulls and bones of its numerous victims, no sacred groves devoted to rites of which brutality and sensuality were the most obvious features, this people had 'lords many and gods many';—their religious system was as obviously marked as any other with absurdity, superstition, and vice."[4]

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 319; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 158; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 146, 149, 154, 159. As to the wooden dibbles, see Ella, *op. cit.* p. 635 (above, p. 166).

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 111 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 130.

[3] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 129.

[4] John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 465 *sq.*

This account of the Samoan religion, written at a time when the islands were not yet fully opened up to Europeans, must be modified by the testimony of later writers, in particular with regard to the alleged absence of temples and offerings; but in its broad outlines it holds good, in so far as the Samoan ritual was honourably distinguished from that of many other islands in the Pacific by its freedom from human sacrifice and from the gross and licentious practices which prevailed in other branches of the Polynesian race. The notion of the Rarotongans that the Samoans were a godless people has proved to be totally mistaken. On closer acquaintance it was found that they lived under the influence of a host of imaginary deities who exercised their faith and demanded their obedience. Among these deities the most numerous and perhaps the most influential were the *aitu*, which were the gods of individuals, of families, of towns or villages, and of districts.[1] These gods were supposed to appear in some visible embodiment or incarnation, and the particular thing, or class of things, in which his god was in the habit of appearing, was to the Samoan an object of veneration, and he took great care never to injure it or treat it with contempt. In the great majority of cases the thing in which the deity presented himself to his worshippers was a class of natural objects, most commonly a species of animal, bird, or fish, less frequently a tree or plant or an inanimate object, such as a stone, the rainbow, or a meteor. One man, for example, saw his god in the eel, another in the shark, another in the turtle, another in the owl, another in the lizard, and so on throughout all the fish of the sea, the birds, the four-footed beasts, and creeping things. In some of the shell-fish, such as the limpets on the rocks, gods were supposed to be present. It was not uncommon to see an intelligent chief muttering prayers to a fly, an ant, or a lizard, which chanced to alight or crawl in his presence. A man would eat freely of the incarnation of another man's god, but would most scrupulously refrain from eating of the incarnation of his

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences* (London, 1866), pp. 106 *sqq.*; T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific*, p. 141; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 16 *sqq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 211, 215 *sqq.*

own particular god, believing that death would be the consequence of such sacrilege. The offended god was supposed to take up his abode in the body of the impious eater and to generate there the very thing which he had eaten, till it caused his death. For example, if a man, whose family god was incarnate in the prickly sea-urchin (*Echinus*), were to eat of a sea-urchin, it was believed that a prickly sea-urchin would grow in his body and kill him. If his family god were incarnate in the turtle, and he was rash enough to eat a turtle, the god would enter into him, and his voice would be heard from within the sinner's body, saying, "I am killing this man; he ate my incarnation." Occasionally, however, the penalty exacted by the deity was less severe. If, for instance, a man's god was in cockles, and he ate one of these shell-fish, a cockle would grow on his nose; if he merely picked up a cockle on the shore and walked away with it, the shell-fish would appear on some part of his person. But in neither case, apparently, would the kindly cockle take the life of the offender. It was not a bloodthirsty deity. Again, a man whose god was in coco-nuts would never drink the refreshing beverage which other people were free to extract from the nuts. But the worshipper who shrank from eating or drinking his god in the shape, say, of an octopus or of coco-nut water, would often look on with indifference while other people partook of these his divinities. He might pity their ignorance or envy their liberty, but he would not seek to enlighten the one or to restrain the other.[1] Indeed this indifference was sometimes carried to great lengths. For example, a man whose god was incarnate in the turtle, though he would not himself dare to partake of turtle, would have no scruple in helping a neighbour to cut up and cook a turtle; but in doing so he took the precaution to tie a bandage over his

[1] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 468; Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 131 *sq.*; T. H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise in H.M.S. "Fawn" in the Western Pacific*, p. 141; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 106 *sqq.*; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 111; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 16 *sqq.*, 40, 50 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 211, 216 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 137, 218. The account of these deities given by Dr. G. Turner is by far the fullest and best.

mouth to prevent an embryo turtle from slipping down his throat and sealing his doom by growing up in his stomach.[1] Sometimes the incarnate deity, out of consideration perhaps for the weakness of the flesh, would limit his presence to a portion of an animal, it might be the left wing of a pigeon, or the tail of a dog, or the right leg of a pig.[2] The advantages of such a restriction to a worshipper are obvious. A man, for instance, to whom it would have been death to eat the right leg of a pig, might partake of a left leg of pork with safety and even with gusto. And so with the rest of the divine menagery.

However, even if the worst had happened, that is to say, if the deity had been killed, cooked and eaten, the consequences were not necessarily fatal to his worshippers; there were modes of redeeming the lives of the sinners and of expiating their sin. Suppose, for example, that the god of a household was the cuttle-fish, and that some visitor to the house had, either in ignorance or in bravado, caught a cuttle-fish and cooked it, or that a member of the family had been present where a cuttle-fish was eaten, the family would meet in conclave to consult about the sacrilege, and they would select one of their number, whether a man or a woman, to go and lie down in a cold oven and be covered over with leaves, just as in the process of baking, all to pretend that the person was being offered up as a burnt sacrifice to avert the wrath of the deity. While this solemn pretence was being enacted, the whole family would engage in prayer, saying, "O bald-headed cuttle-fish, forgive what has been done. It was all the work of a stranger." If they did not thus abase themselves before the divine cuttle-fish, they believed that the god would visit them and cause a cuttle-fish to grow internally in their bodies and so be the death of some of them.[3] Similar modes of appeasing the wrath of divine eels, mullets, stinging ray fish, turtles, wild pigeons, and garden lizards were adopted with equal success.[4]

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 67 *sq.*

[2] W. T. Pritchard, *op. cit.* p. 107. Similarly some people had pig's heart for their god, or the embodiment of their god, and they scrupulously avoided eating pigs' hearts lest pigs' hearts should grow in their bodies and so cause their death. See G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 72.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 31 *sq.*

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 38, 58, 59, 69 *sq.*, 72.

Apparently the Samoans were even more concerned to defend their village gods or district gods against injury and insult than to guard the deities of simple individuals. We are told that all the inhabitants of a district would thus unite for the protection of the local divinity.[1] For example, it happened that in a village where the first native Christian teachers settled one of them caught a sea-eel (*Muraena*) and cooked it, and two of the village lads, who were their servants, ate some of the eel for their supper. But the eel was the village god, and when the villagers heard that the lads had eaten the god, they administered a sound thrashing to the culprits, and dragged them off to a cooking-house where they laid them down in the oven pit and covered them with leaves in the usual way, as if the lads had been killed and were now to be cooked as a peace-offering to avert the wrath of the deity.[2] When John Williams had caused some Christian natives to kill a large sea-snake and dry it on the rocks to be preserved as a specimen, the heathen fishermen of the island at sight of it raised a most terrific yell, and, seizing their clubs, rushed upon the Christian natives, saying, "You have killed our god! You have killed our god!" It was with difficulty that Mr. Williams restrained their violence on condition that the reptile should be immediately carried back to the boat from which the missionary had landed.[3] The island in which this happened belonged to the Tongan group, but precisely the same incident might have occurred in Samoa. In some parts of Upolu a goddess was believed to be incarnate in bats, and if a neighbour chanced to kill one of these creatures, the indignant worshippers of the bat might wage a war to avenge the insult to their deity.[4] If people who had the stinging ray fish for the incarnation of their god heard that their neighbours had caught a fish of that sort, they would go and beg them to give it up and not to cook it. A refusal to comply with the request would be followed by a fight.[5]

Accordingly, when the Samoans were converted to

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 216 *sq.*
[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 58.
[3] J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 469.
[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 57.
[5] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 75.

Christianity, they gave the strongest proof of the genuineness of their conversion by killing and eating their animal gods. Thus when a chief named Malietoa renounced heathenism, he caused an eel to be publicly caught, cooked, and eaten by many persons who had hitherto regarded the eel as their god. His own sons had a different sort of fish, called *anae*, for their private deity, and to demonstrate their faith in the new religion they had a quantity of the fish caught, cooked, and served up in the presence of a large party of friends and relations. There, with trembling hearts, they partook of the once sacred morsel; but, their fears getting the better of them, they immediately retired from the feast and swallowed a powerful emetic, lest the divine fish should lie heavy on their stomachs and devour their vitals.[1] As nothing particular happened after these daring innovations, the people took heart of grace, and concerted further plans for the destruction of their ancient deities. Among these was a certain Papo, who was nothing more or less than a piece of old rotten matting, about three yards long and four inches wide; but being a god of war and, in that capacity, always attached to the canoe of the leader when they went forth to battle, he was regarded with great veneration by the people. At the assembly convoked to decide on his fate, the first proposal was to throw him into the fire. But the idea was too shocking to the general sense of the community, and by way of making death as little painful as possible to the deity, they decided to take him out to sea in a canoe and there consign him to a watery grave. Even from this mitigated doom Papo was rescued by the efforts of the missionaries, and he now adorns a museum.[2]

But even when the career of one of these animal gods was not prematurely cut short by being killed, cooked, and eaten, he was still liable to die in the course of nature; and when his dead body was discovered, great was the sorrow of his worshippers. If, for example, the god of a village was an owl, and a dead owl was found lying beside a road or under a tree, it would be reverently covered up with a white cloth by the person who discovered it, and all

[1] J. Williams, *op. cit.* pp. 373 *sq.* [2] J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 375.

the villagers would assemble round the dead god and burn their bodies with firebrands and beat their foreheads with stones till the blood flowed. Then the corpse of the feathered deity would be wrapped up and buried with as much care and ceremony as if it were a human body. However, that was not the death of the god. He was supposed to be yet alive and incarnate in all the owls in existence.[1]

The offerings to these deities consisted chiefly of cooked food,[2] which was apparently deemed as essential to the sustenance of gods as of men, and that even when the gods were not animals but stones. For example, two oblong smooth stones, which stood on a platform of loose stones near a village, were regarded as the parents of the rain-god, and when the people were making ready to go off to the woods for the favourite sport of pigeon-catching, they used to lay offerings of cooked taro and fish on the stones, accompanied by prayers for fine weather and no rain. These stone gods were also believed to cause yams to grow; hence in time of dearth a man would present them with a yam in hope of securing their favour.[3]

At the feasts the first cup of kava was dedicated to the god, the presiding chief either pouring it out on the ground or waving it towards the sky. Afterwards all the chiefs drank from the same cup according to their rank; then the food brought as an offering was divided and eaten there before the god.[4] Even within the circle of the family it was customary to pour out on the ground a little kava as an offering to the family god before any one else drank of it.[5]

Annual feasts were held in honour of the gods, and the season of the feast was often in May, but sometimes in April or June.[6] In some cases the feasts were regulated by the appearance of the bird which was believed to be the incarnation of the god. Whenever the bird was seen, the priest would say that the god had come, and he would

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 21, 26, 60 *sq.* Compare W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 110 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 20.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 24 *sq.*

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 20; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 121 *sqq.*

[5] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 229.

[6] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 20, 26, 29, 41, 44, 47, 53, 57.

fix upon a day for the entertainment of the deity.[1] At these festivals all the people met in the place of public assembly, where they had collected heaps of cooked food. First, they made their offerings to the god and prayed to him to avert calamity and grant prosperity; then they feasted with and before their god, and after that any strangers present might eat. Some of the festivals included games, such as wrestling, spear-throwing, club exercises, sham-fights, and nocturnal dances; and they lasted for days.[2] At one of these annual festivals held in the month of June, the exercise with clubs assumed a serious and indeed sanguinary form. All the people, old and young, men, women, and children, took part in it, and battered their scalps till the blood streamed down over their faces and bodies. This proof of their devotion was supposed to be acceptable to the deity, who, gratified by the sight of their flowing blood, would answer their prayers for health, good crops, and victory in war.[3] At the feast of the cockle god in May prayers were offered up to the divine shell-fish that he would be pleased to cure the coughs and other ailments usually prevalent at that season, which in Samoa forms the transition from the wet to the dry months.[4] At the festival of an owl god, which fell about the month of April, the offerings and prayers were particularly directed towards the removal of caterpillars from the plantations; for these insects were believed to be the servants of the owl god, who could send them as his ministers of vengeance to lay waste the fields and orchards of the impious.[5] Elsewhere the owl was a war god, and at the beginning of the annual fish festivals the chiefs and people of the village assembled round the opening of the first oven and gave the first fish to the god.[6] A family, who had the eel for their household god, showed their gratitude to him for his kindness by presenting him with the first fruits of their taro plantation.[7] Another family believed their deity to be incarnate in centipedes; and if a member of the family fell ill or was

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 20 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 20, 26, 29; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, p. 123.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 57.

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 41.

[5] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 47.

[6] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 25 *sq.*

[7] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 70 *sq.*

bitten by a centipede, they would offer the divine reptile a fine mat and a fan, with a prayer for the recovery of the patient.[1] The utility of a fine mat and a fan to a centipede is too obvious to be insisted on. Sometimes offerings were made to a god, not to persuade him to come, but to induce him to go away. For example, where gods or spirits were believed to voyage along the coast, offerings of food were often set down on the beach as an inducement to the spirits to take the victuals and pass on without calling at that particular place.[2]

Formal prayers were offered to the god by the head of a family, and public prayer was put up when the men were setting out for war. On such occasions they prayed that stones, stumps of trees, and other obstacles might be taken out of the way of the warriors, and that their path might be wet with the blood of their foes. All their prayers were for temporal benefits, such as protection against enemies, plenty of food, and other desirable objects. They attached great importance to confession of wrongdoing in times of danger, but, so far as appears, they expressed no repentance, promised no amendment, and offered no prayer for forgiveness. If, for example, a canoe, crossing the channel between Savaii and Upolu, were caught in a squall and seemed likely to be swamped, the steersman would head the canoe to the wind, and every man on board would make a clean breast of his sins. One would say, "I stole a fowl at such and such a village." Another would confess an intrigue with a married woman somewhere else; and so on. When all had either confessed their guilt or declared their innocence, the helmsman would put the helm about and scud before the wind, in perfect confidence of bringing the canoe and crew safe to land.[3]

When a god was believed to be incarnate in a species of birds or animals or fish, omens were naturally drawn from the appearance and behaviour of the creatures. This happened particularly in time of war, when hopes and fears were rife among the people. Thus, if their war god was an

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 47 *sq.*

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 229.

[3] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 229 *sq.*

owl, and the bird fluttered above the troops on the march, the omen was good ; but if the owl flew away in the direction of the enemy, it was an evil omen, the god had deserted them and joined the foe ;[1] if it crossed the path of the warriors or flew back on them, it was a warning to retreat.[2] So in places where the war-god was a rail-bird, if the bird screeched and flew before the army, the people marched confidently to battle ; but if it turned and flew back, they hesitated. If the plumage of the rail showed glossy red, it was a sign to go to war ; but if the feathers were dark and dingy, it was a warning to stay at home. And if the bird were heard chattering or scolding, as they called it, at midnight, it prognosticated an attack next day, and they would at once send off the women and children to a place of safety.[3] In like manner omens were drawn from the flight of herons, kingfishers, the *Porphyris Samoensis,* and flying-foxes, where these creatures were supposed to incarnate the war god.[4] People who saw their war god in the lizard used to take omens from a lizard before they went forth to fight. They watched the movements of a lizard in a bundle of spears. If the creature ran about the outside of the bundle and the points of the spears, the omen was favourable ; but if it crept into the bundle for concealment, it was an evil sign.[5] The inhabitants of several villages looked upon dogs, especially white dogs, as the incarnation of their war god ; accordingly if the dog wagged his tail, barked, and dashed ahead in sight of the enemy, it was a good omen ; but if he retreated or howled, their hearts failed them.[6] Again, where the cuttle-fish was the war god, the movements of that fish at sea were anxiously observed in time of war. If the fish swam inshore while the people were mustering for battle, it augured victory ; but if it swam far away, it portended defeat.[7]

When a god was supposed to dwell in some inanimate object, the art of divination was similarly employed to elicit a knowledge of the future from an observation of the object,

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 25 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 60.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 52, 61, 65.

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 35, 51, 54 *sq.*, 64.

[5] G. Turner, pp. 46 *sq.*

[6] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 49.

[7] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 29.

whatever it might be. In several villages, for example, the people viewed a rainbow as the representative of their war god. If, when they were going to battle by land or sea, a rainbow appeared in the sky right in front of them, with the arch, as it were, straddling across the line of march or the course that the fleet was steering, it was a warning to turn back. But if the bow shone on the right or left of the army or of the fleet, it meant that the god was marching with them, and cheering on the advance.[1] Another village revered its god in the lightning. When lightning flashed frequently in time of war, it was believed that the god had come to help and direct his people. A constant play of lightning over a particular spot was a warning that the enemy was lurking there in ambush. A rapid succession of flashes in front meant that the foe was being driven back; but if the lightning flashed from front to rear, it was a signal to retreat.[2] In one large village the war god resided in two teeth of the sperm whale, which were kept in a cave and observed by a priest in time of war. If the teeth were found lying east and west, it was a good omen; but if they lay north and south, it prognosticated defeat.[3] In another place the war god was present in a bundle of shark's teeth, and the people consulted the bundle before they went out to fight. If the bundle felt heavy, it foreboded ill; but if it was light, it was an omen of victory, and the troops marched with hearts correspondingly light.[4]

When the god was incarnate in a live creature, it was an obvious advantage to ensure his constant presence and blessing by owning a specimen of his incarnation and feeding it. Hence some folk kept a tame god on their premises. For instance, some people possessed a war god in the shape of a pet owl;[5] others had a divine pigeon, which was carefully kept and fed by the different members of the family in turn.[6] Yet others were so fortunate as to capture the thunder god and to keep him in durance, which effectually prevented him from doing mischief. Having caught him, they tied him up with pandanus leaves and frightened him by poking fire-

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 35; compare p. 43.
[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 59 *sq.*
[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 35.
[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 55.
[5] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 25 *sq.*
[6] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 64.

brands at him. And lest, as an old offender, he should attempt to break prison and relapse into his former career of crime, they filled a basket with pandanus leaves and charred firebrands and hung it up on a tree *in terrorem*, to signify what he might expect to get if he took it into his head to strike houses again.[1]

Vegetable gods were much less plentiful than animal gods in Samoa. Still they occurred. Thus, the god of one family lived in a large tree (*Hernandia peltata*); hence no member of the family dared to pluck a leaf or break a branch of that tree.[2] The household deity of another family dwelt in a tree of a different sort (*Conanga odorata*), which has yellow and sweet-scented flowers.[3] In Savaii the special abode of a village god called Tuifiti or "King of Fiji" was a grove of large and durable trees (*Afzelia bijuga*). No one dared to cut that timber. It is said that a party of natives from another island once tried to fell one of these trees; but blood flowed from the trunk, and all the sacrilegious strangers fell ill and died.[4] One family saw their god in the moon. On the appearance of the new moon all the members of the family called out, "Child of the moon, you have come." They assembled also, presented offerings of food, feasted together, and joined in praying, "Oh, child of the moon! Keep far away disease and death." And they also prayed to the moon before they set out on the war path.[5] But in Samoa, as in Tonga, there seems to be no record of a worship of the sun, unless the stories of human sacrifices formerly offered to the great luminary be regarded as reminiscences of sun-worship.[6]

§ 7. *Priests and Temples*

The father of a family acted as the priest of the household god. He usually offered a short prayer at the evening meal, begging the deity to guard them all from war, sickness, death, and the payment of fines. Sometimes he would direct the family to hold a feast in honour of their god, and on these occasions a cup of kava was poured out as a libation

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 34.
[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 72.
[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 71.
[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 63.
[5] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 67.
[6] See above, p. 158.

to the divinity. Such simple domestic rites were celebrated in the house, where the whole family assembled; for the gods were believed to be present with men in a spiritual and invisible form as well as in the material objects which were regarded as their visible embodiments. Often the deity spoke through the father or other members of the family, telling them what to do in order to remove a present evil or avert a threatened one.[1]

But while every head of a family might thus act as a domestic priest and mouthpiece of the deity, there was also a professional class of priests set apart for the public worship of the gods, particularly of the war gods, who in their nature did not differ essentially from the gods of families, of villages, and of districts, being commonly embodied either in particular material objects or in classes of such objects, especially in various species of birds, animals, and fish, such as owls, rails, kingfishers, dogs, lizards, flying-foxes, and cuttle-fish. Sometimes the ruling chiefs acted as priests; but in general some one man in a particular family claimed the dignity of the priesthood and professed to declare the will of the god. His office was hereditary. He fixed the days for the annual feasts in honour of the deity, received the offerings, and thanked the people for them. He decided also whether the people might go to war.[2] The priests possessed great authority over the minds of the people, and they often availed themselves of their influence to amass wealth.[3] The gods were supposed from time to time to take possession of the priests and to speak through their mouths, answering enquiries and issuing commands. Thus consulted as an oracle the priest, or the god through him, might complain that the people had been slack in making offerings of food and property, and he would threaten them with vengeance if they did not speedily bring an ample supply to the human representative of the deity. At other times the god required a whole family to assemble and build him a large canoe or a

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 18. For the offering of kava to the household god, compare *id.* p. 51.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 20. For a full account of the priesthood, see J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 220 *sqq.* As to the Samoan war-gods, see G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 23, 25 *sq.*, 27 *sq.*, 28, 32, 33, 35, 42, 46 *sq.*, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54 *sq.*, 55, 57, 60, 61, 64, 65; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 215 *sq.*

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 70, 222 *sq.*, 225; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 228, 246 *sq.*

house, and such a command was always obeyed with alacrity and a humble apology tendered for past neglect. The priests were also consulted oracularly for the healing of the sick, the recovery of stolen property, and the cursing of enemies. Thus they kept the people in constant fear by their threats and impoverished them by their exactions.[1]

The outward signs of divine inspiration or possession were such as priests or prophets have manifested in many lands and ages as conclusive evidence of their being the vehicles of higher powers. The approach or presence of the god was indicated by the priest beginning to gape, yawn, and clear his throat; but soon his countenance changed, his body underwent violent contortions, and in loud, unearthly tones, which the trembling and awe-stricken hearers interpreted as the voice of an indwelling deity, he delivered his message of exhortation or warning, of menace, or comfort, or hope.[2]

Spirit-houses (*fale-aitu*) or temples were erected for some, but not all, of the class of deities (*aitu*) which we are now considering. It was chiefly the war gods who were thus honoured. Such temples were built with the same materials and in the same style as the houses of men, with nothing to distinguish them from ordinary dwellings, except that they almost always stood on platforms of stones, which varied in height and size with the respect felt for the particular deity. They were usually situated on the principal public place or green (*malae*) of the village and surrounded by a low fence. Sometimes they were mere huts; yet being viewed as the abode of gods they were held sacred and regarded with great veneration by the Samoans in the olden time. Whatever emblems of deity were in possession of the village were always placed in these houses under the watchful care of keepers.[3] In one temple, for instance, might be seen a conch shell hung from the roof in a basket. This shell the god was supposed to blow when he wished the people to go to war. In another a cup made of the shell of a coco-nut was suspended from the roof, and before it prayers were uttered

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 223-225; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 246 *sq.*

[2] J. B. Stair, p. 223; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 228, 246 *sq.*

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 226-228.

and offerings presented. The cup was also used in an ordeal for the detection of theft. In a trial before chiefs the cup would be sent for, and each of the suspected culprits would lay his hand on it and say, "With my hand on this cup, may the god look upon me, and send swift destruction, if I took the thing which has been stolen." They firmly believed that it would be death to touch the cup and tell a lie.[1]

The temples were always built by the united exertions of a whole family, village, or district.[2] For example, when the inhabitants of a village whose god was the cuttle-fish erected a new temple to that deity, every man, woman, and child in the village contributed something to it, if it was only a stick or a reed of thatch. While some of the villagers were drafted off to put up the house, the rest engaged in a free fight, which appears to have been considered as a necessary part of the proceedings. On this occasion many old scores were settled, and he who got most wounds was believed to have earned the special favour of the deity. With the completion of the temple the fighting ended, and ought not to be renewed for a year, till the anniversary of the building of the temple came round, when the worshippers were again at liberty to break each other's heads in honour of the divine cuttle-fish.[3]

At one place in Savaii there was a temple in which a priest constantly resided. The sick used to be carried to him in the temple and there laid down with offerings of fine mats. Thereupon the priest stroked the diseased part, and the patient was supposed to recover.[4] We hear of another temple in which fine mats were brought as offerings to the priests and stored up in large numbers among the temple treasures. Thus in time the temples might have amassed a considerable degree of wealth and might even, if economic progress had not been arrested by European intervention, have developed into banks. However, when the people were converted to Christianity, they destroyed this particular temple and dissipated the accumulated treasures in a single

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 19.

[2] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 227 *sq.*

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 29 *sq.*

[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 49.

feast by way of celebrating their adhesion to the new faith.[1] Where the bat was the local deity, many bats used to flock about the temple in time of war.[2] Where the kingfisher received the homage of the people as the god of war, the old men of the village were wont to enter his temple in times of public emergency and address the kingfisher ; and people outside could hear the bird replying, though, singularly enough, his voice was that of a man, and not that of a bird. But as usual the god was invisible.[3] In one place a temple of the great god Tangaloa was called "the House of the Gods," and it was carefully shut up all round, the people thinking that, if this precaution were not taken, the gods would get out and in too easily and be all the more destructive.[4] Such a temple might be considered rather as a prison than a house of the gods.

To the rule that Samoan temples were built of the same perishable materials as ordinary houses a single exception is known. About ten miles inland from the harbour of Apia, in the island of Upolu, are the ruins of a temple, of which the central and side posts and the rafters were all constructed of stone. The ground plan seems to have resembled that of an ordinary Samoan house of the best style, forming an ellipse which measured fifty feet in one direction by forty feet in the other. Two central pillars appear to have supported the roof, each fashioned of a single block of stone some thirteen feet high, twelve inches thick one way and nine inches the other. The rafters were in lengths of twelve feet and six feet, by four inches square. Of the outside pillars, which upheld the lower edge of the sloping roof, eighteen were seen standing by Pritchard, who has described the ruins. Each pillar stood three feet high and measured nine inches thick in one way by six inches in the other. Each had a notch or shoulder on the inner side for supporting the roof. Pillars and rafters were quarried from an adjoining bluff, distant only some fifty yards from the ruins. Some squared stones lying at the foot of the bluff seem to show that the temple was never completed. The site of the ruins is a flat about three acres in area. The natives call the

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 55.
[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 56 *sq.*
[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 54 *sq.*
[4] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 53.

ruins *Fale-o-le-Fe'e*, that is, the House of the Fe'e. This Fe'e was a famous war god of A'ana and Faleata, two native towns of Upolu; he was commonly incarnated in the cuttle-fish. As the Samoans were unacquainted with the art of cutting stones, and had no tools suitable for the work, they thought that this temple, with its columns and rafters of squared stone, must have been built by the gods, and they explained its unfinished state by alleging that the divine builders had quarrelled among themselves before they had brought the work to completion.[1]

For the sake of completeness I will mention another stone monument, of more imposing dimensions, which has been discovered in Samoa, though its origin and meaning are unknown. It stands on a tableland in the high mountainous interior of Upolu and appears to be not altogether easy of access. The discoverer, Mr. H. B. Sterndale, reached it by clambering up from what he describes as a broad and dangerous ravine. In making his way to the tableland he passed through a gap which from a distance he had supposed to be a natural fissure in the rocks; but on arriving at it he discovered, to his surprise, that the gap was in fact a great fosse formed by the hand of man, being excavated in some places and built up at others, while on one side, next to the rise of the hill, it was further heightened by a parapet wall. When, passing through the fosse, he issued upon the tableland, which is a level space of some twenty acres in extent, he perceived the monument, "a truncated conical structure or *Heidenmauer* of such huge dimensions as must have required the labour of a great multitude to construct. So little did I expect," he says, "in this neighbourhood to meet with any example of human architecture, and so rudely monstrous was the appearance of this cyclopean building, that from its peculiar form, and from the vegetation with which it was overgrown, I might have passed it by, supposing it to have been a volcanic hillock, had not my attention been attracted by the stone-work of the fosse. I hastened to ascend it. It was about

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 119-121; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) p. 112; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 31; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 228; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 220.

twenty feet high by one hundred in diameter. It was circular with straight [perpendicular?] sides; the lower tiers of stone were very large, they were lava blocks, some of which would weigh at least a ton, which must have been rolled or moved on skids to their present places. They were laid in courses; and in two places near the top seemed to have been entrances to the inside, as in one appeared a low cave choked with rocks and tree roots. If there had been chambers within, they were probably narrow and still existing, as there was no sign of depression on the crown of the work, which was flat and covered with flat stones, among which grew both trees and shrubs. It is likely that it was not in itself intended as a place of defence, but rather as a base or platform upon which some building of importance, perhaps of timber, had been erected, no doubt in the centre of a village, as many foundations of a few feet high were near it. The fosse, when unbroken, and its inner wall entire, was probably crossed by a foot-bridge, to be withdrawn on the approach of an enemy; and the little gap, by which I had entered, closed, so that this must have been a place of great security. The Samoan natives, as far as I have been able to learn, have no tradition of what people inhabited this mountain fastness." [1]

On an adjoining tableland, approached by a steep and narrow ridge, Mr. Sterndale saw a great number of cairns of stone, apparently graves, disposed in rows among huge trees, the roots of which had overturned and destroyed very many of the cairns. Here, within the numerous trunks of a great spreading banyan tree, Mr. Sterndale found what he calls an inner chamber, or cell, about ten feet square, the floor being paved with flat stones and the walls built of enormous blocks of the same material, while the roof was composed of the twisted trunks of the banyan tree, which had grown into a solid arch and, festooned by creepers, excluded even the faint glimmer of twilight that dimly illuminated the surrounding forest. Disturbed by

[1] H. B. Sterndale, quoted by R. A. Sterndale, "Asiatic Architecture in Polynesia," *The Asiatic Quarterly Review*, x. (July-October 1890) pp. 347-350. The writer of this article reports the discoveries of his brother, Mr. Handley Bathurst Sterndale.

a light which the traveller struck to explore the gloomy interior, bats fluttered about his head. In the centre of the chamber he discovered a cairn, or rather cromlech, about four feet high, which was formed of several stones arranged in a triangle, with a great flat slab on the top. On the flat slab lay a large conch shell, white with age, and encrusted with moss and dead animalculae. The chamber or cell, enclosed by the trunks of the banyan-tree, might have been inaccessible, if it were not that, under the pressure of the tree-trunks, several of the great slabs composing the wall had been displaced, leaving a passage.[1]

What were these remarkable monuments? Mr. Sterndale believed the stone chamber to be the tomb of some man of authority in ancient days, the antiquity of the structure being vouched for by the great banyan-tree which had so completely overgrown it. This view is likely enough, and is confirmed by the large number of cairns about it, which appear to be sepulchral. But what was the massive circular monument or platform, built of huge blocks of lava laid in tiers? From Mr. Sterndale's description it would seem that the structure closely resembled the tombs of the sacred kings of Tonga, though these tombs are oblong instead of circular. But they often supported a house or hut of wood and thatch; and Mr. Sterndale may well be right in supposing that the circular Samoan monument in like manner served as a platform to support a wooden building. In this connexion we must not forget that the typical Samoan house was circular or oval in contrast to the typical Tongan house, which was oblong. The openings, which seemed to lead into the interior of the monument, may have given access to the sepulchral chamber where the bodies of the dead were deposited.

Slight as are these indications, they apparently point to the use of the monument as a tomb. There is nothing, except perhaps its circular shape, to suggest that it was a temple of the sun. As no such stone buildings have been erected by the Samoans during the time they have been

[1] H. B. Sterndale, *op. cit.* pp. 351 *sq.*

under European observation, it may be, as Mr. Sterndale supposed, that all the ruins described by him were the work of a people who inhabited the islands before the arrival of the existing race.[1]

§ 8. *Origin of the Samoan Gods of Families, Villages, and Districts: Relation to Totemism*

If we ask, What was the origin of the peculiar Samoan worship of animals and other natural objects? the most probable answer seems to be that it has been developed out of totemism. The system is not simple totemism, for in totemism the animals, plants, and other natural objects are not worshipped, that is, they do not receive offerings nor are approached with prayers; in short, they are not gods, but are regarded as the kinsfolk of the men and women who have them for totems. Further, the local distribution of the revered objects in Samoa, according to villages and districts, differs from the characteristic distribution of totems, which is not by place but by social groups or clans, the members of which are usually more or less intermixed with each other in every district. It is true that in Samoa we hear of family or household gods as well as of gods of villages and districts, and these family gods, in so far as they consist of species of animals and plants which the worshippers are forbidden to kill or eat, present a close analogy to totems. But it is to be observed that these family gods were, so to say, in a state of unstable equilibrium, it being always uncertain whether a man would inherit his father's or his mother's god or would be assigned a god differing from both of them. This uncertainty arose from the manner of determining a man's god at birth. When a woman was in travail, the help of several gods was invoked, one after the other, to assist the birth; and the god who happened to be invoked at the moment when the child saw the light, was his god for life. As a rule, the god of the father's family was prayed to first; so that generally, perhaps, a man inherited the god of his father. But if the birth was tedious and difficult, the god of the

[1] H. B. Sterndale, *op. cit.* p. 352.

mother's family was next invoked. When the child was born, the mother would call out, "To whom were you praying?" and the god prayed to just before was carefully remembered, and his incarnation duly acknowledged throughout the future life of the child.[1] Such a mode of selecting a divine patron is totally different from the mode whereby, under pure totemism, a person obtains his totem; for his totem is automatically determined for him at birth, being, in the vast majority of cases, inherited either from his father or from his mother, without any possibility of variation or selection. Lastly, the Samoan system differs from most, though not all, systems of totemism, in that it is quite independent of exogamy; in other words, there is no rule forbidding people who revere the same god to marry each other.

Thus, while the Samoan worship of certain classes of natural objects, especially species of animals, is certainly not pure totemism, it presents points of analogy to that system, and might easily, we may suppose, have been developed out of it, the feeling of kinship for totemic animals and plants having been slowly transformed and sublimated into a religious reverence for the creatures and a belief in their divinity; while at the same time the clans, which were originally intermixed, gradually sorted out from each other and settled down in separate villages and districts. This gradual segregation of the clans may have been facilitated by a change from maternal to paternal descent of the totem; for when a man transmits his totem to his offspring, his descendants in the male line tend naturally to expand into a local group in which the totem remains constant from generation to generation instead of alternating with each successive generation, as necessarily happens when a man's children take their totem not from him but from their mother. That the Samoan worship of *aitu* was developed in some such way out of simple totemism appears to have been the view of Dr. George Brown, one of our best authorities on Samoan society and religion; for he speaks without reserve of the revered objects as totems.[2] A similar

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 17, 78 *sq.*

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 137, 218, 334.

derivation of the Samoan *aitu* was favoured by Dr. Rivers, who, during a visit to Samoa, found some evidence confirmatory of this conclusion.[1]

§ 9. *The High Gods of Samoa*

But besides these totemic gods of Samoa, as we may term them, which were restricted in the circle of their worshippers to particular families, villages, or districts, there were certain superior deities who were worshipped by all the people in common and might accordingly be called the national divinities of Samoa; indeed the worship of some of them was not confined to Samoa, but was shared by the inhabitants of other groups of islands in Polynesia. These high gods were considered the progenitors of the inferior deities, and were believed to have formed the earth and its inhabitants. They themselves dwelt in heaven, in the sea, on the earth, or under the earth; but they were invisible and did not appear to their worshippers in the form of animals or plants. They had no temples and no priests, and were not invoked like their descendants.[2]

Among these high gods the chief was Tangaloa, or, as he was sometimes called, Tangaloa-langi, that is, Tangaloa of the Skies. He was always spoken of as the principal god, the creator of the world and progenitor of the other gods and of mankind.[3] It is said that after existing somewhere in space he made the heavens as an abode for himself, and that wishing to have also a place under the heavens he created this lower world (*Lalolangi*, that is, "Under the heavens"). According to one account, he formed the islands of Savaii and Upolu by rolling down two stones from the sky; but according to another story he fished them up from the depths of the sea on a fishing-hook. Next he made the *Fee* or cuttle-fish, and told it to go down under the earth; hence the lower regions of sea or land are called *Sa he fee* or "sacred to the cuttle-fish." In its turn the cuttle-fish brought forth all kinds of rocks, including

[1] W. H. R. Rivers, "Totemism in Polynesia and Melanesia," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, xxxix. (1909) pp. 159 *sq.*

[2] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 111 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 211 *sq.*

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 212.

the great one on which we live.[1] Another myth relates how Tangaloa sent down his son or daughter in the likeness of a bird called *turi*, a species of plover or snipe (*Charadrius fulvus*). She flew about, but could find no resting-place, for as yet there was nothing but ocean; the earth had not been created or raised above the sea. So she returned to her father in heaven and reported her fruitless search; and at last he gave her some earth and a creeping plant. These she took down with her on her next visit to earth; and after a time the leaves of the plant withered and produced swarms of worms or maggots, which gradually developed into men and women. The plant which thus by its corruption gave birth to the human species was the convolvulus. According to another version of the myth, it was in reply to the complaint of his daughter or son that the sky-god Tangaloa fished up the first islands from the bottom of the sea.[2]

Another of the national gods of Samoa was Mafuie, who was supposed to dwell in the subterranean regions and to cause earthquakes by shaking the pillar on which the earth reposes. In a tussle with the hero Ti'iti'i, who descended to the lower world to rob Mafuie of his fire, the earthquake god lost one of his arms, and the Samoans considered this as a very fortunate circumstance; for otherwise they said that, if Mafuie had had two arms, he would have shaken the world to pieces.[3] It is said that during a shock of earthquake the natives used to rush from their houses, throw themselves upon the ground, gnaw the grass, and shriek in the most frantic manner to Mafuie to desist, lest he should shake the earth to bits.[4]

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 7.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 7 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 212-214. The bird *turi* or *tuli* is spoken of by Turner as the daughter, but by Stair as the son, of Tangaloa. According to Turner, the bird is a species of snipe; according to Stair, a species of plover. As to Tangaloa and the stories told about him, compare John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 469 *sq.*; H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 22; Violette, "Notes d'un Missionnaire sur l'archipel de Samoa," *Les Missions Catholiques*, iii. (1870) pp. 111 *sq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 463, *s.v.* "Tangaroa."

[3] Ch. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, ii. 131; W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 112, 114 *sqq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 209-211; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 238 *sq.*

[4] J. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 379.

It seems to be doubtful whether among the Samoan gods are to be numbered the souls of deceased ancestors. Certainly the evidence for the practice of a worship of the dead is far less full and clear in Samoa than in Tonga. On this subject Dr. George Brown writes as follows: "Traces of ancestor worship are few and indistinct. The word *tupua* is supposed by some to mean the deified spirits of chiefs, and to mean that they constituted a separate order from the *atua*, who were the original gods. The word itself is the name of a stone, supposed to be a petrified man, and is also generally used as the name of any image having some sacred significance, and as representing the body into which the deified spirit was changed. What appears certain is that ancestor worship had amongst the Samoans gradually given place to the worship of a superior order of supernatural beings not immediately connected with men, but having many human passions and modes of action and life. There are, however, some cases which seem to point to ancestor worship in olden days, as in the case of the town of Matautu, which is said to have been settled by a colony from Fiji. Their principal deity was called Tuifiti, the King of Fiji. He was considered to be the head of that family, and a grove of trees, *ifilele* (the green-heart of India), was sacred to him and could not be cut or injured in any way."[1] This god was supposed to be incarnate in a man who walked about, but he was never visible to the people of the place, though curiously enough he could be seen by strangers.[2]

However, another experienced missionary, J. B. Stair, who knew Samoa a good many years before Dr. Brown arrived in it, speaks apparently without hesitation of the *tupua* as being "the deified spirits of chiefs, who were also supposed to dwell in Pulotu," where they became posts in the house or temple of the gods. Many beautiful emblems, he says, were chosen to represent the immortality of these deified spirits; among them were some of the heavenly bodies, including the Pleiades and the planet Jupiter, also

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 223. See also above, p. 192.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 62 *sq.* The town or village of Matautu is in the island of Savaii. According to G. Turner, the sacred tree of Tuifiti was the *Afzelia bijuga*.

the rainbow, the marine rainbow, and many more. He adds that the embalmed bodies of some chiefs were worshipped under the significant title of "sun-dried gods"; and that people prayed and poured libations of kava at the graves of deceased relatives.[1]

§ 10. *The Samoan Belief concerning the Human Soul: Funeral Customs*

Whether the Samoans practised the worship of the dead in a developed form or not, they certainly possessed the elements out of which the worship might under favourable circumstances be evolved. These elements are a belief in the survival of the human soul after death, and a fear of disembodied spirits or ghosts.

The Samoans believed that every man is animated by a soul, which departs from the body temporarily in faints and dreams and permanently at death. The soul of the dreamer, they thought, really visited the places which he saw in his dream. At death it departed to the subterranean world of the dead which the Samoans called Pulotu, a name which clearly differs only dialectically from the Tongan Bolotoo or Bulotu. Some people professed to see the parting soul when it had quitted its mortal body and was about to take flight to the nether region. It was always of the same shape as the body. Such apparitions at the moment of death were much dreaded, and people tried to drive them away by shouting and firing guns. The word for soul is *anganga*, which is a reduplicated form of *anga*, a verb meaning "to go" or "to come." Thus apparently the Samoans did not, like many people, identify the soul with the shadow; for in Samoan the word for shadow is *ata*.[2]

However, they seem to have in a dim way associated a man's soul with his shadow. This appears from a remarkable custom which they observed in the case of the

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 210 *sq.*, 215.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 8, 16; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 220; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 218 *sq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 26, *s.v.* "Ata."

unburied dead. The Samoans were much concerned for the lot of these unfortunates and stood in great dread of their ghosts. They believed that the spirits of those who had not received the rites of burial wandered about wretched and forlorn and haunted their relatives everywhere by day and night, crying in doleful tones, "Oh, how cold! oh, how cold!" Hence when the body of a dead kinsman was lost because he had been drowned at sea or slain on a battlefield, some of his relatives would go down to the seashore or away to the battlefield where their friend had perished; and there spreading out a cloth on the ground they would pray to some god of the family, saying, "Oh, be kind to us; let us obtain without difficulty the spirit of the young man!" After that the first thing that lighted on the cloth was supposed to be the spirit of the dead. It might be a butterfly, a grasshopper, an ant, a spider, or a lizard; whatever it might be, it was carefully wrapt up and taken to the family, who buried the bundle with all due ceremony, as if it contained the body of their departed friend. Thus the unquiet spirit was believed to find rest. Now the insect, or whatever it happened to be, which thus acted as proxy at the burial was supposed to be the *ata* or shadow of the deceased. The same word *ata* served to express likeness; a photographer, for example, is called *pue-ata*, "shadow-catcher." The Samoans do not appear to have associated the soul with the breath.[1]

They attributed disease and death to the anger of a god, to the agency of an evil spirit, or to the ghost of a dead relative who had entered into the body of the sufferer. Epilepsy, delirium, and mania were always thus explained by the entrance into the patient of a god or demon. The Samoan remedy for all such ailments was not medicine but

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 170 *sq.*, 218 sq.; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 150 *sq.*; S. Ella, "Samoa," *Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Hobart, Tasmania, in January 1892*, pp. 641 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 184. According to Brown and Stair the ceremony described in the text was observed when a man had died a violent death, even when the relatives were in possession of the body, and in that case the insect, or whatever it might be, was buried with the corpse. I have followed Turner and Ella in supposing that the ceremony was only observed when the corpse could not be found. As to the fear of the spirits of the unburied dead, see also W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 58 *sq.*, 151.

exorcism. Sometimes a near relative of the sick person would go round the house brandishing a spear and striking the walls to drive away the spirit that was causing the sickness.[1] Hence when a member of a family fell seriously ill, his friends did not send for a doctor, but repaired to the high priest of the village to enquire of him the cause of the sickness, to learn why the family god (*aitu*) was angry with them, and to implore his mercy and forgiveness. Often the priest took advantage of their anxiety to demand a valuable piece of property, such as a canoe or a parcel of ground, as the best means of propitiating the angry deity and so ensuring the recovery of the patient. With all these demands the anxious and unsuspecting relatives readily complied. But if the priest happened not to want anything in particular at the time, he would probably tell the messengers to gather the family about the bed of the sufferer and there confess their sins. The command was implicitly obeyed, and every member of the family assembled and made a clean breast of his or her misdeeds, especially of any curse which he or she might have called down either on the family generally or on the invalid in particular. Curiously enough, the curse of a sister was peculiarly dreaded; hence in such cases the sister of the sick man was closely questioned as to whether she had cursed him and thus caused his illness; if so, she was entreated to remove the curse, that he might recover. Moved by these pleadings, she might take some coco-nut water in her mouth and spurt it out towards or upon the body of the sufferer. By this action she either removed the curse or declared her innocence; a similar ceremony might be performed by any other member of the family who was suspected of having cursed the sick man.[2]

When an illness seemed likely to prove fatal, messengers were despatched to friends at a distance that they might come and bid farewell to the dying man. Every one who came to visit the sufferer in his last moments brought a

[1] S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 639, 643; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 223 *sq.*, 402.

[2] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 146 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 140 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 639; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 180 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 223 *sq.*, 401.

present of a fine mat or other valuable piece of property as a token of regard, and to defray the cost of the illness and funeral. The best of the mats would be laid on the body of the dying man that he might have the comfort of seeing them before he closed his eyes for ever. Dr. George Brown thought that the spirits of the mats thus laid on the body of the dying chief were supposed to accompany his soul to the other world. It is possible that their spirits did so, but it is certain that their material substance did not; for after the funeral all the mats and other valuables so presented were distributed among the mourners and friends assembled on the occasion, so that every one who had brought a gift took away something in return on his departure.[1]

If the dying man happened to be a chief, numbers crowded round him to receive a parting look or word, while in front of the house might be seen men and women wildly beating their heads and bodies with great stones, thus inflicting on themselves ghastly wounds, from which the blood poured as an offering of affection and sympathy to their departing friend or lord. It was hoped that, pleased and propitiated by the sight of their devotion, the angry god might yet stay his hand and spare the chief to his people. Above all the tumult and uproar would rise the voice of one who prayed aloud for the life then trembling in the balance. But if the prayer seemed likely to prove ineffectual, it was exchanged for threats and upbraiding. "O thou shameless spirit," the voice would now be heard exclaiming, "could I but grasp you, I would smash your skull to pieces! Come here and let us fight together. Don't conceal yourself, but show yourself like a man, and let us fight, if you are angry."[2]

Immediately after death, all the mats on the floor of the house were thrown outside, and the thatched sides of the house were either torn down or knocked in with clubs; while the relatives and assembled crowds wrought themselves up to frenzy, uttering loud shrieks, rending their garments, tearing out their hair by handfuls, burning their bodies with

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *op. cit.* pp. 147, 150 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 141 *sq.*, 146; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 639; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 180; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 220, 401, 405 *sq.*

[2] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 181 *sq.*

firebrands, beating their faces and heads with clubs and stones, or gashing themselves with shells and shark's teeth, till the blood ran freely down. This they called an offering of blood for the dead. In their fury some of the mourners fell on the canoes and houses, breaking them up and tearing them down, felling the bread-fruit trees, and devastating the plantations of yams and taro.[1]

As decomposition is rapid in the hot moist climate of Samoa, it was customary to bury commoners a few hours after death. The body was laid out on a mat, anointed with scented oil, and the face tinged with turmeric, to soften the cadaverous look. It was then wound up in several folds of native cloth and the chin propped up, the head and face being left uncovered, while for some hours longer the body was surrounded by weeping relatives, who kept constant watch over it, so long as it remained in the house. These watchers were always women, and none of them might quit her post under any pretext till she was relieved by another. A fire was kept burning brightly in the house all the time. If the deceased had died of a complaint which had previously carried off other members of the family, they would probably open the body to "search for the disease." Any inflamed substance which they happened to find they would take away and burn, thinking thus to prevent any other member of the family from being similarly afflicted. Such a custom betrays an incipient sense of death from natural, instead of supernatural, causes, and must have contributed to diffuse a knowledge of human anatomy.[2]

So long as a corpse remained in the house no food might be eaten under the roof; the family had their meals outside or in another house. Those who had attended to the deceased or handled the corpse were taboo: they might not feed themselves or touch food with their hands. For days they were fed by others as if they were helpless infants. Baldness and the loss of teeth were supposed to be

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, p. 148; G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 144; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 640; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 182; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 401 *sq.*

[2] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 148 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 144 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, 182; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 402.

the punishment inflicted by the household god for a breach of the rule. Many people fasted at such times, eating nothing during the day, but taking a meal in the evening. The fifth day was a day of purification. The tabooed persons then washed their faces and hands with hot water and were clean ; after that they were free to eat at the usual time and in the usual manner.[1]

The ordinary mode of disposing of the dead was by interment either in a stone vault or in a shallow grave. But occasionally other modes were adopted, such as embalming, putting the corpse in a canoe and setting it adrift on the sea, or exposing it on a stage erected in the forest, where it was left to decay, the bones being afterwards collected and buried. Upon the death of a chief his body was generally deposited in a family vault, the sides and bottom of which were lined with large slabs of sandstone or basalt, while another large slab of the same material formed the roof. Such vaults were sometimes large and massive. The stones used in their construction were found in various parts of the islands. Commoners were buried in shallow graves.[2]

Ordinary people were usually buried the day after they died. As many friends as could be present attended the funeral. Every one brought a present, but on the day after the funeral all these presents, like those which had previously been made to the dying man, were distributed again, so that none went empty-handed away. The corpse was generally buried without a coffin ; but chiefs were laid in hollow logs or canoes. However, even the bodies of common people were sometimes interred in rude coffins similarly constructed. There were no common burying-grounds ; all preferred to bury their dead on their own land. Often the grave was dug close to the house. The body was laid in it with the head to the east and the feet to the west. When it had been thus committed to its last resting-place, a near relative of the deceased, a sister, if one survived, seated herself at the grave, and waving a white cloth over the corpse, began an address to the dead. "Compassion to you," she said, "go

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 145 ; W. T. Pritchard, *op. cit.* p. 149 ; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 640 ; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 182 ; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 402.

[2] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 178 *sq.*

with goodwill, and without bearing malice towards us. Take with you all our diseases, and leave us life." Then pointing to the west, she exclaimed, "Misery there!" Next pointing to the east, she cried, "Prosperity there!" Lastly, pointing to the grave, she said, "Misery there; but leave happiness with us!" With the body they deposited in the grave several things which had been used by the deceased during his illness, such as his clothing, his drinking-cup, and his bamboo pillow. The wooden pickaxes and coco-nut shells employed as shovels in digging the grave were also carefully buried with the corpse. It was not, we are told, because the people believed these things to be of use to the dead; but because it was supposed that, if they were left and handled by others, further disease and death would be the consequence. Valuable mats and other articles of property were sometimes buried with the corpse, and the grave of a warrior was surrounded with spears stuck upright in the ground. Graves were sometimes enclosed with stones and strewn with sand or crumbled coral.[1]

The obsequies of a chief of high rank were more elaborate. The body was kept unburied for days until his clansfolk had assembled from various parts of the islands and paraded the body, shoulder high, through the village, chanting a melancholy dirge.[2] The mourning and ceremonies lasted from ten to fifteen days. All that time the house of death was watched night and day by men appointed for the purpose. After the burial, and until the days of mourning were ended, the daytime was generally spent in boxing and wrestling matches, and sham-fights, while the nights were occupied with dancing and practising a kind of buffoonery, which was customary at these seasons of mourning for the dead. The performance was called *O le tau-pinga*. The performers amused themselves by making a variety of ludicrous faces and grimaces at each other, to see who could excite the other to laugh first. Thus they whiled away the hours of night till the days of mourning were expired.[3] So long as the funeral ceremonies and feasts lasted

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 150 *sq.*; G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 146 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 640 *sq.*; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 179 *sq.*, 182 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 403.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 146

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 183 *sq.*

no work might be done in the village, and no strangers might approach it. The neighbouring lagoon and reefs were taboo: no canoe might pass over the lagoon anywhere near the village, and no man might fish in it or on the reef.[1] For a chief or man of distinction fires were kept burning day and night in a line from the house to the grave; these fires were maintained for ten days after the funeral. The reason assigned for this custom, according to Ella, was to keep away evil spirits. Even common people observed a similar custom. After burial they kept a fire blazing in the house all night, and they were careful to clear the intervening ground so that a stream of light went forth from the house to the grave. The account which the Samoans gave of the custom, according to Turner, was that it was merely a light burning in honour of the departed, and a mark of their tender regard for him. Dr. George Brown believed that the original motive for the custom was to warm the ghost, and probably at the same time to protect the mourners against dangerous spirits.[2]

The head was deemed a very sacred part, and in olden days the bodies of chiefs were often buried near their houses until decomposition had set in, when the head was cut off and interred in some family burying-place inland, to save it from insult in time of war. This interment of the head was accompanied with feasts, dances, and sham-fights. The skull was borne to the appointed place on a kind of stage, attended by a troop of armed men. With these sham-fights Dr. George Brown, who records the custom, compares the sham-fights which used to take place among the Melanesians of the Duke of York Island when the body of a chief was laid on a high platform in front of his house, one company of warriors striving to deposit the corpse on the platform, while their adversaries attempted to prevent them from doing so.[3] The meaning of these curious sham-fights is obscure. Perhaps the attacking party represented a band of evil spirits, who endeavoured

[1] W. T. Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, pp. 149 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 642; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 403 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 149; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 640 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 402.

[3] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 388 *sq.*, 404 *sq.*

to snatch away the chief's body, but were defeated in the nefarious attempt.

One or two families of chiefs in the island of Upolu used to practise a rude kind of embalming. The work was done exclusively by women. The viscera having been removed and buried, the women anointed the body daily with a mixture of oil and aromatic juices. To let the fluids escape, they punctured the body all over with fine needles. Finally, wads of native cloth, saturated with oil or resinous gums, were inserted in the abdomen, the apertures were closed up, and the body wrapt in native cloth. The face, hands, and feet were left exposed, and were repeatedly anointed with oil, mixed with turmeric powder, to give a fresh and life-like appearance to the mummy. The whole process lasted about two months. On its completion the mummy was placed in a house built specially for the purpose, where, loosely covered with a sheet of native cloth, it rested on a raised platform. Strangers were freely admitted to see it. Four of these mummies, laid out in a house, were to be seen down to about the year 1864. They were the bodies of a chief, his wife, and two sons. Dr. George Turner judged that they must have been embalmed upwards of thirty years, and although they had been exposed all that time, they were in a remarkably good state of preservation. The people assigned no particular reason for the practice, further than that it sprang from an affectionate desire to keep the bodies of their departed friends with them, as if they were still alive.[1]

§ 11. *The Fate of the Human Soul after Death*

With regard to the fate of human souls after death the Samoans appear to have believed in their immortality, or at all events in their indefinite survival. On this subject Dr. Brown observes: "All souls survived after death, and so far as I know they had no idea of their dying a second death or being destroyed. I do not think that a Samoan could give any reason for his belief that the soul does not

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 148 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 641; J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 184 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 405.

perish with the body, but he certainly does believe this, and I never heard any one question the fact."[1] Thus, according to Dr. Brown the Samoans, unlike the Tongans, drew no invidious distinction between the souls of noblemen and the souls of commoners, but liberally opened the doors of immortality to gentle and simple alike. So far, they carried their republican or democratic spirit into the world beyond the grave.

However, according to the American ethnologist, Horatio Hale, some of the Samoans agreed with the Tongans in taking an aristocratic view of the destiny of souls after death; and as he had good opportunities for acquainting himself with the Samoan religion during the prolonged stay of the American Exploring Expedition at Samoa in 1839, when the islands were as yet but little affected by European influence, I will quote his account. He says: "All believe in the existence of a large island, situated far to the north-west called *Pulótu*, which is the residence of the gods. Some suppose that while the souls of the common people perish with their bodies, those of the chiefs are received into this island, which is described as a terrestrial elysium, and become there inferior divinities. Others hold (according to Mr. Heath) that the spirits of the departed live and work in a dark subterraneous abode, and are eaten by the gods. A third, and very common opinion is, that the souls of all who die on an island, make their way to the western extremity, where they plunge into the sea; but what then becomes of them is not stated. The rock from which they leap, in the island of Upolu, was pointed out to us; the natives term it '*Fatu-asofia*,' which was rendered the 'jumping-off stone.'"[2]

Of these various opinions described by Hale the third would seem to have been by far the most prevalent. It was commonly believed that the disembodied spirit retained the exact resemblance of its former self, by which we are probably to understand the exact resemblance of its former body. Immediately on quitting its earthly tabernacle it

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 220 *sq.*

[2] H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 27.

began its solitary journey to Fafa, which was the subterranean abode of the dead, lying somewhere to the west of Savaii, the most westerly island of the group. Thus, if a man died in Manua, the most easterly of the islands, his soul would journey to the western end of that island, then dive into the sea and swim across to Tutuila. There it would walk along the beach to the extreme westerly point of the island, when it would again plunge into the sea and swim across to the next island, and so on to the most westerly cape of Savaii, where it finally dived into the ocean and pursued its way to the mysterious Fafa.[1]

At the western end of Savaii, near the village of Falealupo, there are two circular openings among the rocks, not far from the beach. Down these two openings the souls of the dead were supposed to go on their passage to the spirit-world. The souls of chiefs went down the larger of the openings, and the souls of common people went down the smaller. Near the spot stood a coco-nut tree, and if a passing soul chanced to collide with it, the soul could not proceed farther, but returned to its body. When a man recovered from a deep swoon, his friends supposed that his soul had been arrested in its progress to the other world by knocking against the coco-nut tree, and they rejoiced, saying, "He has come back from the tree of the Watcher," for that was the name by which the coco-nut tree was known. So firmly did the people of the neighbourhood believe in the passage of the souls near their houses, that at night they kept down the blinds to exclude the ghosts.[2] The "jumping-off stone" at the west end of Upolu was also dreaded on account of the passing ghosts. The place is a narrow rocky cape. The Samoans were much astonished when a Christian native boldly built himself a house on the haunted spot.[3] According to one account, the souls of the dead had not to make their way through the chain of islands by the slow process of walking and swimming, but were at once transported to the western end of Savaii by a band of spirits, who hovered over the house of the dying man, and catching

[1] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 218 *sq.* Compare G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 257; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 643 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 257 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* pp. 643 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 221.

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 219.

up his parting spirit conveyed it in a straight course westward.[1]

The place down which the spirits of the dead were supposed to descend to the nether world was called by a native name (*Luaō*), which means "hollow pit." "May you go rumbling down the hollow pit" was a common form of cursing. At the bottom of the pit was a running stream which floated the spirits away to Pulotu. All alike, the handsome and the ugly, old and young, chiefs and commoners, drifted pell-mell on the current in a dazed, semi-conscious state, till they came to Pulotu. There they bathed in "the Water of Life" and recovered all their old life and vigour. Infirmity of every kind fled away; even the aged became young again. The underworld of Pulotu was conceived on the model of our upper world. There, as here, were heavens and earth and sea, fruits and flowers; there the souls of the dead planted and fished and cooked; there they married and were given in marriage, all after the manner of life on earth.[2]

However, it appears that according to a widespread belief the world of the dead was sharply discriminated into two regions, to wit, an Elysium or place of bliss called Pulotu, and a Tartarus or place of woe named Sā-le-Fe'e. The title for admission to one or other of these places was not moral worth but social rank, chiefs going to Elysium and commoners to Tartarus. The idea of the superiority of the chiefs to the common people was thus perpetuated in the land of the dead.[3] The king of the lower regions was

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 257; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 643.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 258 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 222.

[3] J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, pp. 217 *sq.*; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 221. On the question whether the Samoans held a doctrine of moral retribution after death, Dr. Brown observes: "I do not remember any statement to the effect that the conduct of a man in this life affected his state after death. They certainly believe this now, but whether they did so prior to the introduction of Christianity I cannot definitely say. I am inclined, however, to believe that they did not believe that conduct in this life affected them in the future" (*Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 261 *sq.*). Elsewhere, however, Dr. Brown seems to express a contrary opinion. He says: "It was generally understood that the conditions of men in this life, even amongst the common people, had an effect on their future conditions. A good man in Samoa generally meant a liberal man, one who was generous and hospitable; whilst a bad man was one who was mean, selfish, and greedy about food" (*op. cit.* p. 222).

a certain Saveasiuleo, that is, Savea of the Echo. He reclined in a house in the company of the chiefs who gathered round him: the upper part of his body was human, the lower part was like that of a fish and stretched away into the sea. This royal house of assembly was supported by the erect bodies of chiefs, who had been of high rank on earth, and who, before they died, anticipated with pride the honour they were to enjoy by serving as pillars in the temple of the King of Pulotu.[1]

But the souls of the dead were not permanently confined to the lower world. They could return to the land of the living by night to hold converse with members of their families, to warn and instruct them in dreams, and to foretell the future. They could cause disease and death by entering into the bodies of their enemies and even of their friends, and they produced nightmare by sitting on the chests of sleepers. They haunted some houses and especially burying-grounds. Their apparitions were visible to the living and were greatly dreaded; people tried to drive them away by shouts, noises, and the firing of guns. But the ghosts had to return to the nether world at daybreak. It was because they feared the spirits of the dead that the Samoans took such great pains to propitiate dying people with presents; this they did above all to persons whom they had injured, because they had most reason to dread the anger of their ghosts.[2] However, the souls of the departed were also thought of in a more amiable light; they could help as well as harm mankind. Hence prayers were commonly offered at the grave of a parent, a brother, or a chief. The suppliant, for example, might pray for health in sickness; or, if he were of a malignant turn, he might implore the ghost to compass the death of some person at whom he bore a grudge. Thus we are told that a woman prayed for the death of her brother, and he died accordingly.[3] In such beliefs and practices we have, as I have already observed, the essential elements of a regular worship of the dead. Whether the Samoans were on the way to evolve such a religion or, as

[1] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 259 *sq.*; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 644.

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 259; S. Ella, *op. cit.* p. 644; G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 219, 221, 222.

[3] G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 151.

Dr. George Brown preferred to suppose,[1] had left it behind them and made some progress towards a higher faith, we hardly possess the means of determining.

But while the Samoans thought that the dead return to earth to make or mar the living, they did not believe that the spirits come back to be born again in the form of men or animals or to occupy inanimate bodies; in other words they had no belief in the transmigration of souls.[2] The absence of such a belief is significant in view of Dr. Rivers's suggestion that Melanesian totemism may have been evolved out of a doctrine of metempsychosis, human souls being supposed to pass at death into their totem animals or plants.[3] We have seen that the Samoan system of family, village, and district gods bears strong marks of having been developed out of totemism; and if their totemism had in turn been developed out of a doctrine of transmigration, we should expect to find among them a belief that the souls of the dead appeared in the shape of the animals, plants, or other natural objects which were regarded as the embodiments of their family, village, or district gods. But of such a belief there is seemingly no trace. It appears, therefore, unlikely that Samoan totemism was based on a doctrine of transmigration. Similarly we have seen reason to think that the Tongan worship of animals may have sprung from totemism, though according to the best authorities that worship was not connected with a theory of metempsychosis.[4] Taken together, the Samoan and the Tongan systems seem to show that, if totemism ever flourished among the Polynesians, it had not its roots in a worship of the dead.

[1] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 245, 282.

[2] G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, p. 221, "They had no belief in the transmigration of souls either into animals, inert bodies, or into different human bodies."

[3] W. H. R. Rivers, *The History of Melanesian Society*, ii. 358 *sqq*.

[4] See above, pp. 92 *sqq*.

CHAPTER IV

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE HERVEY ISLANDERS

§ 1. *The Hervey or Cook Islands*

THE Hervey or Cook Archipelago is a scattered group of nine small islands situated in the South Pacific about seven hundred miles south-east of Samoa. The islands are either volcanic or coralline, and approach to them is impeded by dangerous reefs and the absence of harbours.[1] The two principal islands are Rarotonga and Mangaia, the most southerly of the group. Of these the larger, Rarotonga, has a circumference of about thirty miles. It is a vast mass of volcanic mountains, rising peak above peak, to a height of between four and five thousand feet above the sea; but from the foot of the mountains a stretch of flat land, covered with rich alluvial soil, extends for one or two miles to the coast, which is formed by a fringing reef of live coral. The whole island is mantled in luxuriant tropical verdure. It is difficult, we are told, to exaggerate the strange forms of beauty which everywhere meet the eye in this lovely island: gigantic and fantastic columns of rock draped with vines; deep valleys lying in the shadow of overhanging mountains; primaeval forest with its many shades of green; immense chestnut trees, laden with fragrant blossoms; miles of bread-fruit groves, intermingled with coco-nut palms; and nearer the beach plantains, bananas, sweet potatoes, and lastly, growing to the water's edge, graceful iron-wood trees with

[1] F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. (London, 1894) p. 509.

hair-like leaves drooping like tresses, all contribute to the variety and charm of the scenery.[1]

Very different is the aspect of Mangaia. It is a complete coral island rising from deep water as a ring of live coral; there is no lagoon. A few hundred yards inland from the rugged beach there rises gradually a second or inner ring of dead coral, which towards the interior falls away perpendicularly, thus surrounding the island like a cyclopean wall. This belt or bulwark of dead coral is from one to two miles wide. To cross it is like walking on spear-points: to slip and fall on it may entail ghastly wounds. The streams of water from the interior find their way through it to the sea by subterranean channels. Imbedded in the highest parts of this inland reef of coral are many sea-shells of existing species, and it is honeycombed with many extensive caves, which were formerly used as dwellings, cemeteries, places of refuge, or storehouses. Scores of them are filled with desiccated human bodies. So vast are they that it is dangerous to venture alone into their recesses; the forlorn wanderer might never emerge from them again. Some of them are said to penetrate far under the bed of the ocean. In these caverns stalactite and stalagmite abound, forming thick and fast-growing layers of limestone rock. The largest and most famous of the caves is known as the Labyrinth (*Tuatini*). The interior of the island is formed of dark volcanic rock and red clay, descending in low hills from a flat-topped centre, called the Crown of Mangaia. The summit is not more than six hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea.[2]

§ 2. *The Islanders and their Mode of Life*

Though the natives speak a Polynesian language closely akin to the Samoan and have legends of their migration

[1] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles* (London, N.D.), p. 11. Compare John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (London, 1838), pp. 16, 174-176. According to Dr. Guillemard (*loc. cit.*), the height of Rarotonga is 2900 feet; according to W. W. Gill, our principal authority on the island, it is 4500 feet.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 7 *sq.*; *id.*, *From Darkness to Light in Polynesia* (London, 1894), pp. 6 *sq.*; A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder* (Berlin, 1900), pp. 271 *sqq.*, 274 *sqq.* (as to the caverns).

from Samoa, they appear not to be pure Polynesians. They say that they found black people on Rarotonga; and their more pronounced features, more wavy hair, darker complexion, and more energetic character seem to indicate an admixture of Melanesian blood. In Mangaia, indeed, this type is said to predominate, the natives of that island being characterised by dusky brown skin, wavy or frizzly hair, and ample beards: their features, too, are more prominent than those of the Rarotongans, and their manners are wilder.[1] Cannibalism prevailed in most of the islands of the group down to the conversion of the natives to Christianity, which took place between 1823 and 1834, when, with the exception of a few pagans in Mangaia, there did not remain a single idolater, or vestige of idolatry, in any one of the islands. However, many years afterwards old men, who had partaken of cannibal feasts, assured a missionary that human flesh was far superior to pork.[2]

In the larger islands the natives cultivated the soil diligently even before their contact with Europeans. The missionary John Williams, who discovered Rarotonga in 1823, found the island in a high state of cultivation. Rows of superb chestnut trees (*inocarpus*), planted at equal distances,

[1] F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 509. Compare A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 257 *sq.*, 269. The latter writer remarks on the great variety of types among the natives of these islands. In Mangaia he found the people darker than in Rarotonga, undersized, sturdy, with thick lips, noses broad and sunken at the bridge, which gave them a somewhat wild appearance. As to the tradition of an emigration of the Hervey Islanders from Samoa, see W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 23 *sqq.* "The Mangaians themselves trace their origin to Avaiki, or nether world; but Avaiki, Hawai'i, and Savai'i, are but slightly different forms of one word. The *s* of the Samoan dialect is invariably dropped in the Hervey Group dialects, whilst a *k* is substituted for the break at the end. No native of these days doubts that by Avaiki his ancestors really intended Savai'i, the largest island of the Samoan Group. In Polynesia, to sail *west* is to go *down*; to sail *east* is to go *up*. To sail from Samoa to Mangaia would be 'to come up,' or, to translate their vernacular closely, 'to climb up.' In their songs and myths are many references to 'the hosts of *Uk*upolu,' undoubtedly the Upolu of Samoa" (W. W. Gill, *op. cit.* p. 25). Compare *id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific* (London, 1876), pp. 166 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 13 *sq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *Report of the Second Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science held at Melbourne, 1890*, p. 324. As to the date of the introduction of Christianity into the Hervey Islands, see John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 491 *sq.*

stretched from the base of the mountains to the sea, while the spaces between the rows, some half a mile wide, were divided into taro patches, each about half an acre in extent, carefully banked up and capable of being irrigated at pleasure. On the tops of the banks grew fine bread-fruit trees placed at equal intervals, their stately foliage presenting a pleasing contrast to the pea-green leaves of the ordinary taro and the dark colour of the giant taro (*kape*) in the beds and on the sloping banks beneath.[1] In Rarotonga bread-fruit and plantains are the staple food; in Mangaia it is taro. On the atolls the coco-nut palm flourishes, but no planting can be done, as the soil consists of sand and gravel thrown up by the sea on the ever-growing coral. The inhabitants of the atolls live contentedly on coco-nuts and fish; they are expert fishermen, having little else to do. But fresh fish are also eaten in large quantities on most of the islands.[2] In some of the islands the planting was done by the women, but in others, including Rarotonga, the taro was both planted and brought home by the men. Women cooked the food in ovens of hot stones sunk in holes, and they made cloth from the bark of the paper-mulberry, which they stripped from the tree, steeped in water, and beat out with square mallets of iron-wood. But garments were made also from the inner bark of the banyan and bread-fruit trees.[3] In the old days the native houses were flimsy quadrangular huts constructed of reeds and thatched with plaited leaflets of the coco-nut palm, which were very pervious to rain; but the temples and large houses of chiefs were thatched with pandanus leaves. The doors were always sliding; the threshold was made of a single block of timber, tastefully carved. There was a sacred and a common entrance.[4] Like all the Polynesians, the Hervey Islanders before their discovery were ignorant of the metals. When in a wrecked vessel they found a bag of Californian gold, they thought it

[1] John Williams, *op. cit.* pp. 175 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 12, 15; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *Report of the Second Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science held at Melbourne, 1890*, p. 336.

[3] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 332 *sq.*, 338.

[4] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 16; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 335 *sq.*

was something good to eat and proceeded to cook the nuggets in order to make them juicy and tender.[1]

§ 3. *Social Life: the Sacred Kings*

The people were divided into tribes or clans, each tracing descent in the male line from a common ancestor, and each possessing its own lands, which were inalienable. Exogamy, we are told, was the universal rule in the olden time; but when a tribe was split up in war, the defeated portion was treated as an alien tribe. Polygamy was very common, and was not restricted to chiefs. A man often had two or three sisters to wife at the same time. Distant cousins sometimes, though rarely, married each other; but in such cases they had to belong to the same generation; that is, they must be descended in the same degree, fourth, fifth, or even more remote, from the common ancestor. If misfortune or disease overtook couples linked even by so distant a relationship, the elders would declare that it was brought upon them by the anger of the clan-god. It was the duty of parents to teach their growing children whom they might lawfully marry, but their choice was extremely limited. Children as a rule belonged to the tribe or clan of their father, unless they were adopted into another. However, parents had it at their option to assign a child at birth either to the tribe of its father or to the tribe of its mother; this they did by pronouncing over the infant the name either of the father's or of the mother's god. Commonly the father had the preference; but occasionally, when the father's tribe was one from which human victims for sacrifice were regularly drawn, the mother would seek to save the child's life by having the name of her tribal god pronounced over it and so adopting it into her own tribe.[2] Circumcision in an imperfect form was practised in the Hervey Islands from time immemorial. It was usually performed on a youth about the age of sixteen. The operation was indispensable to marriage. No woman would knowingly marry an uncircumcised husband. The

[1] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 16.

[2] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 323, 330, 331, 333.

greatest insult that could be offered to a man was to accuse him of being uncircumcised. The rite is said to have been invented by the god Rongo in order to seduce the beautiful wife of his brother Tangaroa, and he enjoined the observance of circumcision upon his worshippers.[1] In Rarotonga it was customary to mould a child's head into a high shape by pressing the forehead and the back of the head between slabs of soft wood. This practice did not obtain on Mangaia nor, apparently, on any other island of the Hervey Group.[2]

In Rarotonga four ranks of society were recognised. These were the *ariki*, or king ; the *mataiapo*, or governors of districts ; the *rangatira*, or landowners ; and the *unga*, or tenants. A man was accounted great according to the number of his *kaingas* or farms, which contained from one to five acres. These were let to tenants, who, like vassals under the feudal system, obeyed the orders of their superior, assisted him in erecting his house, in building his canoe, in making fishing-nets, and in other occupations, besides bringing him a certain portion of the produce of his lands.[3]

The kings were sacred men, being regarded as priests and mouthpieces of the great tutelary divinities.[4] In Mangaia they were the priests or mouthpieces of the great god Rongo. So sacred were their royal persons that no part of their body might be tattooed : they might not take part in dances or in actual warfare. Peace could not be proclaimed nor blood spilt lawfully without the consent of the king speaking in the name of the god Rongo. Quite distinct from, and subordinate to, the sacred king was the "lord of Mangaia," a warrior chief who gained his lordship by a decisive victory. He represented the civil power, while the king represented the spiritual power ; but while the office of the king was hereditary, the office of the civil lord was not. It sometimes happened that the civil lord was at enmity

[1] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 327-329. In the operation the prepuce was slit longitudinally, and the divided pieces were drawn underneath and twisted, so as in time to form a small knot under the urethra. As to the ceremony of assigning a child either to its father's or to its mother's tribe, see W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific* (London, 1876), pp. 36 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 326.

[3] John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 183 *sq.*

[4] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 335.

with the king of his day. In that case the king would refuse to complete the ceremonies necessary for his formal investiture; life would remain unsafe; the soil could not be cultivated, and famine soon ensued. This state of turbulence and misery might last for years, till the obnoxious chief had been in his turn despatched, and a more agreeable successor appointed.[1] Thus the sacred king and the civil lord corresponded to the Tooitonga or sacred chief and the civil king of Tonga.[2]

§ 4. *Religion, the Gods, Traces of Totemism*

Yet though the king of Mangaia ranked above the civil or temporal lord, it devolved on that lord to install a new king in office by formally seating him on "the sacred sandstone" (*te kea inamoa*) in the sanctuary or sacred grove (*marae*)[3] of Rongo on the sea-shore facing the setting sun. The ceremony took place in presence of the leading under-chiefs. The special duty of the king was by offering rhythmical and very ancient prayers to Great Rongo to keep away evil-minded spirits who might otherwise injure the island. For this end the principal king (*te ariki pa uta*) lived in the interior of the island in the sacred and fertile district of Keia. His prayers were thought to avert evil spirits coming from the east. On the barren sea-shore at O-rongo (the seat of the temple or grove of Rongo) lived the secondary king (*te ariki pa tai*), who warded off bad spirits coming from the west. Besides this primary ghostly function, many other important duties devolved upon these royal personages. The secondary or shore king was not infrequently a natural son of the great inland king. By virtue of their office all kings were high priests of Rongo, the tutelary god of Mangaia.[4]

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 293.

[2] See above, pp. 62 *sq.*

[3] In the Hervey Islands a *marae* seems to have been a sacred grove. So it is described by W. W. Gill (*Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 14), who adds in a note: "These *maraes* were planted with *callophylla inophylla*, etc., etc., which, untouched by the hand of man from generation to generation, threw a sacred gloom over the mysteries of idol-worship. The trees were accounted sacred, not for their own sake, but on account of the place where they grew."

[4] W. W. Gill, *From Darkness to Light in Polynesia*, pp. 314 *sq.* As to

But Rongo was not peculiar to the Hervey Islands. He was a great Polynesian deity worshipped in almost every part of the Pacific, and though his attributes differed greatly in different places, a universal reverence was paid to him. In the Hervey Islands, he and his twin brother Tangaroa were deemed the children of Vatea, the eldest of the primary gods, a being half man and half fish, whose eyes are the sun and the moon. The wife of this monstrous deity and mother of the divine twins was Papa, whose name signifies Foundation and who was supposed to be a daughter of Timatekore or "Nothing-more." The twin Tangaroa, another great Polynesian deity, was specially honoured in Rarotonga and Aitutaki, another of the Hervey Islands.[1] The famous Polynesian hero Maui was also well known in the Hervey Islands, where people told how he had brought up the first fire to men from the under world, having there wrested it from the fire-god Mauike;[2] how he raised the sky—a solid vault of blue stone—to its present height, for of old the sky almost touched the earth, so that people could not walk upright;[3] and finally how he caught the great sun-god Ra himself in six nooses made of strong coco-nut fibre, so that the motions of the orb of day, which before had been extremely irregular, have been most orderly ever since.[4]

But besides the divine or heroic figures of more or less anthropomorphic type, which the Hervey Islanders recognised in common with the rest of the Polynesians, we may distinguish in their mythology traces of that other and probably older stage of thought in which the objects of religious reverence are rather animals than men or beings modelled in the image of man. We have seen that this early stage of religion was well preserved in Samoa down to the time when the islands fell under the observation of

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the installation of the priestly king by the temporal lord, see also *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 339 *sq.*

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 3 *sqq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 348 *sq.* As to Rongo and Tangaroa, see E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Wellington, N.Z., 1891), pp. 424 *sq.*, 463 *sq.*, *svv.* "Rongo" and "Tangaroa."

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 51-58.

[3] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 58-60.

[4] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 61-63.

Europeans, and that it was probably a relic of totemism,[1] which at an earlier period may perhaps have prevailed generally among the ancestors of the Polynesians. In the Hervey Islands there was a god called Tonga-iti, who appeared visibly in the form of black and white spotted lizards.[2] Another deity named Tiaio took possession of the body of the large white shark, the terror of these islanders, and he had a small sacred grove (*marae*) set apart for his worship. It is said that this shark-god was a former king of Mangaia, who in the pride of his heart had defiled the sacred district of Keia, the favourite haunt of the gods, by wearing some beautiful scarlet hibiscus flowers in his ears. Now anything red was forbidden in that part of the island as being offensive to the gods; and even the beating of bark-cloth was prohibited there, lest the repose of the gods should be disturbed by the noise. Hence an angry priest knocked the proud and impious king on the head, and the blood of the slain monarch flowed into a neighbouring stream, where it was drunk by a great fresh-water eel. So the spirit of the dead king entered into the eel, but subsequently, pursuing its way to the sea, the spirit forsook the eel and took possession of the shark.[3] Nevertheless he continued occasionally to appear to his worshippers in the form of an eel; for we are told that in the old heathen days, if a huge eel were caught in a net, it would have been regarded as the god Tiaio himself come on a visit, and that it would accordingly have been allowed to return to the water unmolested.[4] It is quite possible that this derivation of the eel-god or shark-god from a former king of Mangaia may be historically correct; for we are told that "many of the deities worshipped in the Hervey Group and other islands of the eastern Pacific were canonised priests, kings, and warriors, whose spirits were supposed to enter into various birds, fish, reptiles, insects, etc., etc. Strangely enough, they were regarded as being, in no respect, inferior to the original deities."[5] Among the creatures in

[1] See above, pp. 182 *sqq.*, 200 *sqq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 10 *sq.*, 19. Another god called Turanga, who was worshipped at Aumoana, was also supposed to be incarnate in white and black spotted lizards. See *id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 96.

[3] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 29 *sq.*

[4] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 79 *sq.*

[5] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 349.

which gods, and especially the spirits of deified men, were believed permanently to reside or to be incarnate were reckoned sharks, sword-fish, eels, the octopus, yellow and black spotted lizards, as well as several kinds of birds and insects.[1] In Rarotonga the cuttle-fish was the special deity of the reigning family down to the subversion of paganism.[2] In Mangaia the tribe of Teipe, whose members were liable to serve as victims in human sacrifices, worshipped the centipede: there was a shrine of the centipede god at Vaiau on the eastern side of Mangaia.[3] Again, two gods, Tekuraaki and Utakea, were supposed to be incarnate in the woodpecker.[4] A comprehensive designation for divinities of all kinds was "the heavenly family" (*te anau tuarangi*); and this celestial race included rats, lizards, beetles, eels, sharks, and several kinds of birds. It was supposed that "the heavenly family" had taken up their abode in these creatures.[5] Nay, even inanimate objects, such as the triton-shell, sandstone, bits of basalt, cinnet, and trees were believed to be thus tenanted by gods.[6] The god Tane-kio, for example, was thought to be enshrined in the planets Venus and Jupiter, and also, curiously enough, in cinnet work.[7] Again, each tribe had its own sacred bird, which was supposed to be sent by a god to warn the people of impending danger.[8] In these superstitions it is possible that we have relics of totemism.

Originally, it is said, the gods spoke to men through the small land birds, but the utterances of these creatures proved too indistinct to guide the actions of mankind. Hence to meet this emergency an order of priests was set apart, the gods actually taking up their abode, for the time being, in their sacred persons. Hence priests were significantly named

[1] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 347. Yet in the same passage the writer affirms that "there is no trace in the Eastern Pacific of the doctrine of transmigration of human souls, although the spirits of the dead are fabled to have assumed, temporarily, and for a specific purpose, the form of an insect, bird, fish, or cloud."

[2] *Id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 289.

[3] *Id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 96, 308, 309.

[4] *Id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 96.

[5] *Id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 34 *sq.*

[6] *Id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 32.

[7] *Id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 96

[8] *Id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 35; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 349.

"god-boxes" (*pia-atua*), a title which was generally abbreviated to "gods," because they were believed to be living embodiments of the divinities. When a priest was consulted, he drank a bowl of kava (*Piper methysticum*), and falling into convulsions gave the oracular response in language intelligible only to the initiated. The oracle so delivered, from which there was no appeal, was thought to have been inspired by the god, who had entered into the priest for the purpose.[1]

§ 5. *The Doctrine of the Human Soul*

Like other Polynesians, the Hervey Islanders believed that human beings are animated by a vital principle or soul, which survives the death of the body for a longer or shorter time. Indeed, they held that nobody dies a strictly natural death except as an effect of extreme old age. Nineteen out of twenty deaths were believed to be caused either by the anger of the gods or by the incantations of "the praying people" or sorcerers.[2] Hence, when a person fell ill, it was customary to consult a priest in order to discover the nature of the sin which had drawn down on the sufferer the wrath of the deity or the enmity of the sorcerer.[3] But besides its final departure at death, the soul was thought to quit the body temporarily on other occasions. In sleep it was supposed to leave the sleeper and travel over the island, holding converse with the dead, and even visiting the spirit-world. It was thus that the islanders, like so many other savages, explained the phenomena of dreams. We are told that some of the most important events in their national history were determined by dreams.[4] Again, they explained sneezing as the return of the soul to the body after a temporary absence. Hence in Rarotonga, when a person sneezes, the bystanders exclaim, as though addressing his spirit, "Ha! you have come back!"[5]

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 35; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 349.

[2] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 342. Compare *id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 35.

[3] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 35; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 339; *id.*, *Life in the Southern Isles*, p. 70.

[4] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 347.

[5] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 177.

How exactly the Hervey Islanders pictured to themselves the nature of the human soul, appears not to be recorded. Probably their notions on this obscure subject did not differ greatly from those of the natives of Pukapuka or Danger Island, a lonely island situated some hundreds of miles to the north-west of the Hervey Group. These savages apparently conceived the soul as a small material substance that varied in size with the dimensions of the body which it inhabited. For the sacred men or sorcerers of that island used to set traps to catch the souls of people, and the traps consisted of loops of coco-nut fibre, which differed in size according as the soul to be caught in one of them was fat or thin, or perhaps according as it was the soul of a child or that of an adult. Two of these soul-traps were presented to Mr. W. W. Gill, the first white missionary to land in Danger Island. The loops or rings were arranged in pairs on each side of two cords, one of which was twenty-eight feet long and the other fourteen. The mode of setting the traps was this. If a person was very sick or had given offence to a sorcerer, the offended wizard or priest would hang a soul-trap by night from a branch of a tree overhanging the house of the sufferer or of the person against whom he bore a grudge; then sitting down beside the snare he would pretend to watch for the flight of the victim's spirit. If the family enquired the sin for which the soul-trap had been set, the holy man would probably allege some ceremonial fault committed by the sick man against the gods. If an insect or small bird chanced to fly through one of the loops, the priest would allege that the man's soul was caught in the mesh, and that there was no hope for it but that the wretch must die. In that case the demon Vaerua, who presided over the spirit-world, was believed to hurry off the poor soul to the nether world, there to feast upon it. The news that So-and-so had lost his soul would then spread through the island, and great would be the lamentation. The friends of the unhappy man would seek to propitiate the sorcerer by large presents of food, begging him to intercede with the dread Vaerua for the restoration of the lost soul. Sometimes the intercessions were successful, and the patient recovered; but at other times the priest reported that his prayers were of no avail,

and that Vaerua could not be induced to send back the soul to re-inhabit the body. The melancholy tidings acted like a sentence of death. The patient gave up all hope and soon pined away through sheer distress at the thought of his soul caught in the trap.[1]

§ 6. *Death and Funeral Rites*

The moment a sick person expired, his near relatives cut off their hair, blackened their faces, and slashed their bodies with shark's teeth, so that the blood might stream down; in Rarotonga it was customary also to knock out some of the front teeth in token of sorrow. During the days of mourning people wore only native cloth, dyed red in the sap of the candle-nut tree and then dipped in the black mud of a taro-patch. The very foul smell of these garments is said to have been symbolical of the putrescent state of the corpse;[2] perhaps at the same time, though we are not told so, it helped to keep the ghost at arm's length.

That the mourners were not anxious to detain the departed spirit appears from a custom observed by the Rarotongans and described by the discoverer of the island, John Williams. He tells us that in order to secure the admission of a departed spirit to future joys, the corpse was dressed in the best attire the relatives could provide, the head was wreathed with flowers, and other decorations were added. A pig was then baked whole and placed on the body of the deceased, surrounded by a pile of vegetable food. After that, supposing the departed to have been a son, the father would thus address the corpse: "My son, when you were alive I treated you with kindness, and when you were taken ill I did my best to restore you to health; and now you are dead, there is your *momoe o*, or property of admission. Go, my son, and with that gain an entrance into the palace of Tiki,[3] and do not come to this world again to disturb and alarm us." The whole would then be buried; and, if they

[1] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 180-183; *id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 171.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 181; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 344.

[3] The name of the god of the Rarotongan paradise.

received no intimation to the contrary within a few days of the interment, the relatives believed that the pig and the rest of the victuals had obtained for the deceased an entrance to the abode of bliss. If, however, a cricket was heard to chirp in the house, it was deemed an ill omen, and they would immediately break into loud laments, saying, for example, "Oh, our brother! his spirit has not entered the paradise; he is suffering from hunger; he is shivering with cold!" Forthwith the grave would be opened and the offering repeated. This usually effected the purpose.[1]

In Rarotonga the provisions which were buried with the dead person as an offering to Tiki sometimes consisted of the head and kidneys of a hog, a split coco-nut, and a root of kava; in the island of Aitutaki it was usual to place at the pit of the stomach of the corpse the kernel of a coco-nut, and a piece of sugar-cane; in Mangaia the extremity of a coco-nut frond served the same purpose of propitiating Tiki and ensuring the entrance of the ghost into paradise.[2]

The bodies of the dead were anointed with scented oil, carefully wrapt up in a number of cloths, and so committed to their last resting-place. They were never disembowelled for the purpose of embalming, but some were desiccated by being kept for about a month and daily anointed with coco-nut oil. A few were buried in the earth within the precincts of a sacred grove (*marae*); but by far the greater number were hidden in caves which were regarded as the private property of certain families. The bodies of warriors were in general carefully concealed by their friends, lest foes should find and burn them in revenge. If a body were buried in the earth, it was always laid face downwards, with chin and knees meeting, and the limbs well secured with coco-nut fibre. A thin covering of earth was spread over the corpse, and large heavy stones were piled on the grave. "The intention," we are informed, "was to render it impossible for the dead to rise up and injure the living." The head of the corpse was always turned to the rising sun. It was customary to bury with the dead some article of value: a woman would

[1] John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 477 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 170 *sq.*

have her cloth-mallet laid by her side, while a man would enjoin his friends to bury with him a favourite stone adze or a beautiful white shell (*Ovula ovum*, Linn.) which he had worn in the dance. Such articles were never afterwards touched by the living. Many people were buried in easily accessible caves, that their relatives might visit the mouldering remains from time to time. On such visits the corpse might be again exposed to the sun, anointed afresh with oil, and wrapt in new cloth. But as the sorrow of the survivors abated, these visits became less and less frequent, and finally ceased.[1]

A death in a family was the signal for a change of names among the near relatives of the deceased. The greatest ingenuity was exercised in devising new appellations. Sometimes these names were most offensive to good taste. This custom of changing names after the death of a relative has survived the conversion of the natives to Christianity;[2] probably it originated in a desire to avoid the unwelcome attentions of the ghost, who might be thought to be attracted by the sound of the familiar names.[3]

As soon as the corpse was committed to its last resting-place, the mourners selected five old coco-nuts, opened them one after the other, and poured the water on the ground. These nuts were then wrapt up in leaves and native cloth and thrown towards the grave; or, if the corpse had been let down by cords into the deep chasm called Auraka, the nuts and other food would be cast down successively upon it. Calling loudly each time the name of the departed, they said, "Here is thy food; eat it." When the fifth nut and the accompanying pudding were thrown down, the mourners cried, "Farewell! we come back no more to thee."[4]

Immediately after a decease a remarkable custom was observed in Mangaia. A messenger was despatched to bear the tidings round the island. On reaching the boundary of each district, he paused to give the war-shout peculiar to the people of the district, adding, "So-and-so is dead."

[1] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 72-76; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 343.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 78 *sq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 344.

[3] See *The Golden Bough*, Part II., *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, pp. 356 *sqq.*

[4] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 187; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 344.

Thereupon near relatives would start off at once for the house of the deceased, each carrying a present of native cloth. Most of the athletic young men of the entire island on the day following united in a series of sham-fights called *ta i te mauri* or "slaying the ghosts." The district where the corpse lay represented the *mauri* or ghosts. The young men belonging to it early in the morning arrayed themselves as if for battle, and, well armed, started off for the adjoining district, where the young men were drawn up in battle array under the name of *aka-oa* or "friends." Having performed the war-dance, the two parties rushed together, clashing their spears and wooden swords, as though fighting in good earnest. The sufferers in this bloodless conflict were supposed to be malignant spirits, who would thus be deterred from doing further mischief to mortals. After the mock battle the combatants united, and, being collectively called *mauri* or "ghosts," passed on to the third district. Throughout the day their leader carried the sacred *iku kikau*, or coco-nut leaf, at the pit of his stomach, like a dead man. Arrived at the third village, they found the younger men ready for the friendly conflict and bearing the name of *aka-oa* or "friends." The battle of the ghosts was fought over again, and then with swelling numbers they passed on to the fourth, fifth, and sixth districts, in every one of them fighting and thrashing the ghosts afresh. Repairing at last with united forces to the place where the corpse was laid out in state, the brave ghost-killers were there entertained at a feast, after which all, except the near relatives, returned to their various homes at nightfall. So similar to actual warfare was this custom of fighting the ghosts that it went by the name of "a younger brother of war."[1] Apparently every death was attributed to the action of ghosts who had carried off the soul of the departed brother or sister; and in order to prevent a repetition of the catastrophe it was deemed necessary to repel or even to slay the ghostly assailants by force of arms.

The mourning ceremonies lasted from ten to fifteen days according to the rank and age of the deceased. During the whole period no beating of bark for the manufacture of the

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 268 *sq.*

native cloth was permitted in the district where the death had occurred. A woman who wished to beat out her bark-cloth must go to another part of the island. This rule is said to have been dictated by a fear of offending the female demon Mueu, who introduced the beating of bark-cloth into the world, but who herself beats out cloth of a very different texture; for her cloth-flail is the stroke of death.[1]

Some months after the decease of a person of note funeral games called *eva* were performed in honour of the departed. These ceremonies invariably took place by day. They were of four sorts.

First, there was the *eva tapara*, or "funeral dirge." In this the mourners appeared with blackened faces, shaved heads, streaming blood, and stinking garments. This, we are told, was a most repulsive exhibition.[2]

Second, there was the *eva puruki* or "war dirge." In this the people arrayed themselves in two columns facing each other, both sides armed with spears made of a brittle kind of wood instead of the fatal iron-wood (*Casuarina equasitifolia*), out of which the spears used in real warfare were made. The performance began with an animated conversation between the leaders of the two squadrons of supposed enemies as to the grounds for war. When this was concluded, the person most nearly related to the deceased began the history of the heroic deeds of the clan by slowly chanting the introductory words. At the appointed pause both companies took up the strain and chanted it vigorously together, the mighty chorus being accompanied by the clash of spears and all the evolutions of war. Then followed a momentary pause, after which a new story would be introduced by the musical voice of the chief mourner, to be caught up and recited in full chorus by both companies as before. These war-dirges were most carefully elaborated, and they embodied the only histories of the past known to these islanders.[3]

Third, there was the *eva toki* or "axe dirge." In this ceremony the performers, armed with mimic axes of iron-

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 182.
[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 271.
[3] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 272.

wood instead of stone, used to cleave the cruel earth which had swallowed up the dead; and as they smote the ground, with tears streaming down their cheeks, they expressed a vain wish that so they might open up a passage through which the spirit of the departed might return. This axe-dirge was appropriate to artisans only, who enjoyed great consideration because their skill was believed to be a gift of the gods.[1]

Fourth, there was the *eva ta* or "crashing dirge." In this ceremony two supposed armies were arrayed against each other as in the "war dirge," but differed from it both in the style of composition and in the weapons employed, the combatants being armed with flat spears or wooden swords. In the dialogue or songs the death of their friends was explained by the anger of the gods, for which reasons were assigned. These performances generally concluded with a sort of comedy, the nature of which has not been described.[2]

Sometimes, instead of these funeral games or ceremonies, a grand tribal gathering was held for the sake of reciting songs in honour of the illustrious dead. Such an assembly met in a large house built for the purpose and well lighted with torches, for the doleful concert always took place at night. As many as sixty songs might be prepared for the occasion and mournfully chanted to the accompanying drone of the great wooden drum. Every adult male relative was bound to recite a song; if he could not compose one himself, he had to pay a more gifted person to furnish him with the appropriate words. Some of the songs or ballads of a touching nature were much admired and long remembered. Several months were needed for the preparation of such a performance or "death-talk," as it was called. Not only had the songs to be composed and the dresses made, but a liberal supply of food had to be provided for the guests.[3]

In general all mourning ceremonies were over within a year of the death. But we hear of a chief of the island of Atiu who mourned for seven years for an only child, living

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 272 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 273.

[3] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 269-271; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 345.

all that time in a hut near the grave, and allowing his hair and nails to grow, and his body to remain unwashed. He was the wonder of all the islanders.[1]

Among the caverns in which, in the island of Mangaia, the dead used to be deposited, two are particularly famous. One of them, at Tamarua, is the chasm called Raupa or "leafy entrance" on account of the dense growth of hibiscus which formerly surrounded this supposed entrance to the shades. It was the ancient burial-place of the Tongan tribe, the descendants of a band of Tongans, who had landed in Mangaia and settled there. The chasm is a hundred and fifty feet deep and has two openings, the smaller of which was used only for chiefs and priests. The other famous sepulchral cavern, called Auraka, is situated on the western side of the island. It was the grand depository of the dead of the ruling families, who claimed to be descended from the great god Rongo. This chasm is not nearly so deep as Raupa, but, like it, has two entrances; the one sacred and the other profane; the former was reserved for the bodies of the nobility, the latter for the bodies of commoners. Besides these ceremonial entrances there are many natural openings into the vast subterranean cave, for the rock is everywhere perforated. It is possible by torchlight to explore the gloomy recesses of the cavern, which in some places contracts to the narrowest dimensions, while in others it expands till the roof is almost lost to sight. Hundreds of well-preserved mummies may be seen lying in rows, some on ledges of stalactite, others on wooden platforms. Mr. Gill, who thrice visited the cave, judged that some of the bodies were over fifty years old. The whole neighbourhood of the great cavern was deemed sacred to wandering disembodied spirits, who were believed to come up at midnight and exhibit the ghastly wounds by which they had met their fate.[2]

[1] W. W. Gill, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 345.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles*, pp. 71 *sq.* As to the settlement of a Tongan colony in Mangaia, see *id.*, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 287 *sq.* In native tradition the colonists were spoken of as "Tongans sailing through the skies" (*Tongaiti-akareva-moana*). Their leader was the first high-priest of the god Turanga.

§ 7. *The Fate of the Human Soul after Death*

The home of the departed spirits was believed to be a vast subterranean region called Avaiki. The natives of Mangaia believed that this mysterious region was situated directly under their island. "As the dead were usually thrown down the deepest chasms, it was not unnatural for their friends to imagine the earth to be hollow, and the entrance to this vast nether world to be down one of these pits. No one can wonder at this who knows that the outer portion of Mangaia is a honeycomb, the rock being pierced in every direction with winding caves and frightful chasms. It is asserted that the Mission premises at Oneroa are built over one of these great caverns, which extends so far towards the sea that the beating of the surf can be distinctly heard, whilst the water, purified from its saline particles, continually drips from the stony roof." The inland opening into the infernal regions was believed to be the great cavern of Auraka, in which, as we have just seen, so many of the dead were deposited.[1]

However, Avaiki was not the home of the ghosts alone; it was tenanted also by the gods, both the greater and the lesser, with their dependants. There they married, and multiplied, and quarrelled, just like mortals. There they planted, cooked, fished, and inhabited dwellings of exactly the same sort as exist on earth. Their food was no better than that of mortals. There might be seen birds, fish, and rats, likewise the mantis, centipedes, and beetles. There the coco-nut palm, the pandanus, and the myrtle flourished, and yams grew in abundance. The gods committed murder and adultery; they got drunk; they lied; they stole. The arts and crafts were also practised by the deities, who indeed taught them to mankind. The visible world, in short, was but a gross copy of the spiritual and invisible world. If fire burns, it is because latent flame was hidden in wood by the god Mauike in Hades. If the axe cleaves, it is because the fairy of the axe is present unseen in the blade. If the iron-

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 152-154.

wood club kills its man, it is because a fierce demon from Tonga lives in the weapon.[1]

The old high-road to the spirit-land used to start from a place called Aremauku, on a cliff overhanging the western ocean. By this road a regular communication was formerly kept up with the infernal regions. It was by this route, for example, that the hero Maui descended in ancient days to the home of the fire-god Mauike and brought up fire for the use of men. However, the denizens of spirit-land in time grew very troublesome by constantly coming up and afflicting mankind with disease and death; they also created a dearth by stealing people's food, and they even ravished their wives. To put an end to these perpetual annoyances a brave and beautiful woman, Tiki by name, rolled herself alive down into the gloomy chasm which led to the infernal world. The yawning abyss closed on her, and there has been no thoroughfare ever since. The spirits have not been able to come up from Avaiki by that road, and the souls of the dead have been equally unable to go down by it; they are now obliged to descend by a different route.[2]

After their departure from the body the spirits of the dead wandered disconsolately along the seashore, picking their steps painfully among the sharp spikes of the coral and stumbling over the bindweed and thick vines which caught their feet. The fragrant smell of the heliotrope, which grows luxuriantly among these barren and rugged rocks, afforded them a little relief, and they wore a red creeper, like a turban, round their heads; the rest of their costume was a miscellaneous collection of weeds which they had picked up in the course of their wanderings. Twice a year, at the summer and winter solstices, they mustered to follow the setting sun down into the under world. They gathered at the two points of the island which face towards the rising of the sun at these two seasons of the year. At the summer solstice, in January, he seems to rise out of the sea opposite to Ana-Kura, that is, the Red Cave, so called because it receives the red rays of the morning. It was there that by far the greater number of the ghosts gathered for their last

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 154.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 154 *sq.*

sad journey with the sun: they all belonged to the southern half of the island. The other point of ghostly muster was called Karanga-iti or "the Little Welcome"; it faced towards the rising of the sun at the winter solstice in June, and it was there that the ghosts born in the northern half of the island assembled. Thus many months might elapse between a death and the final departure of the soul from the land of the living. The weary interval was spent by the spirits in dancing and revisiting their old homes. As a rule they were well disposed to their living relatives, but the ghost of a mother would often grow vindictive when she saw her pet child ill-treated by its stepmother. Sometimes, weary of wandering, the poor ghosts huddled together in the Red Cave, waiting for the midsummer sun and listening to the monotonous moan of the great rollers, which break there eternally.[1]

The exact moment of departure was fixed by the leader of the band. As the time drew near, messengers were despatched to call in the stray ghosts who might be lingering near their ancient haunts. Tearfully they gathered at the Red Cave or on a grassy lawn above it, out of reach of the foam and the billows. All kept their eyes on the spot of the horizon where the sun was expected to appear. At the first streak of dawn the whole band took their departure to meet the rising orb of day. That done, they followed in his train as nearly as might be, flitting behind or beneath him across the rolling waters or the rocks and stones of the coast, till towards the close of day they all mustered at Vairorongo, "the Sacred Stream of Rongo," facing towards the setting sun. The spot is so named from a little rivulet which there rushes out of the stones at the sacred grove (*marae*) of Rongo: none but priests and kings might bathe there in days of old. At the moment when the sun sank beneath the horizon, the entire band of ghosts followed him along the golden track of light across the shimmering sea and descended in his train to the nether world, but not like him to reappear on the morrow.[2]

There were three such points of departure for the spirit-land in Mangaia, all facing the setting sun. Each of them

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 155-157.

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 157 *sq.*

was known as a *Reinga vaerua* or "leaping-place of souls." One of them was at Oneroa, where a rocky bluff stands out by itself like a giant looking towards the west. To it a band of souls from the great cavern of Auraka used to go in mournful procession, and from it they leaped one by one to a second and much smaller block of stone resting on the inner edge of the reef; thence they passed to the outer brink of the reef, on which the surf beats ceaselessly, and from which at sunset they flitted over the ocean to sink with the great luminary into the land of the dead.

Such appears to have been the general notion of the people concerning the departure of human souls at death in Mangaia. Similar ideas prevailed in the other islands of the group, in all of which the "leaping-place of souls" was regularly situated on the western coast of the island.[1]

The teaching of the priests added many particulars to this general account of the journey of the soul to the nether world. According to them the souls of the dying, before life was quite extinct, left their bodies and travelled towards the edge of the cliff at Araia, near the sacred grove (*marae*) of Rongo, which faced westward. But if on its way to this fatal bourne the soul of the dying chanced to meet a friendly spirit who cried to it, "Go back and live," the departing soul would joyfully return to its forsaken body, and the sick man or woman would revive. This was the native explanation of fainting. But if no friendly spirit intervened to save the passing soul, it pursued its way to the edge of the cliff. On its arrival a great wave of the sea washed the base of the crag, and a gigantic *bua* tree (*Beslaria laurifolia*), covered with fragrant blossoms, sprang up from Avaiki to receive the ghost. The tree had as many branches as there were principal gods in Mangaia, and every ghost had to perch on the particular branch allotted to members of his or her tribe; the worshippers of the great gods, such as Motoro and Tane, had separate boughs provided for their accommodation; while the worshippers of the lesser deities huddled together on a single big branch.[2]

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 159 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 160 *sq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 346.

No sooner had the ghost perched on the place appointed for him than down plumped the tree with him into the nether world. Looking down to see where he was going, what was the horror of the ghost to perceive a great net spread by Akaanga and his assistants to catch him at the foot of the tree! Into this fatal net the doomed spirit inevitably fell to sink in a lake of fresh water and there to wriggle like a fish for a time. At last the net was pulled up with the ghost in it, who, half-drowned, was now ushered trembling into the presence of the grim hag Miru, generally known as "the Ruddy," because her face reflected the glowing heat of the ever-burning oven in which she cooked her ghostly victims. At first, however, she fed, and perhaps fattened, them on a diet of black beetles, red earth-worms, crabs, and small blackbirds. Thus refreshed, they had next to drain bowls of strong kava brewed by the fair hands of the hag's four lovely daughters. Reduced to a state of insensibility by the intoxicating beverage, the ghosts were then borne off without a struggle to the oven and cooked. On the substance of these hapless victims Miru and her son and her peerless daughters regularly subsisted. The leavings of the meal were thrown to the servants. Such was the fate of all who died what we should call a natural death, and therefore of all cowards, women, and children. They were annihilated.[1]

Not so with warriors who fell fighting on the field of battle. For a time, indeed, their souls wandered about among the rocks and trees where their bodies were thrown, the ghastly wounds by which they met their fate being still visible. The plaintive chirping of a certain cricket, rarely seen but heard continually at night, was believed to be the voice of the slain warriors sorrowfully calling to their friends. At last the first who fell would gather his brother ghosts at a place a little beyond Araia, on the edge of the cliff and facing the sunset. There they would linger for a time. But suddenly a mountain sprang up at their feet, and they ascended it over the spears and clubs which had given them their mortal wounds. Arrived at the summit they leaped up into the blue expanse, thus becoming the peculiar clouds of

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific* pp. 161 *sq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* pp. 346 *sq.*

the winter or dry season. During the rainy season they could mount up to the warriors' paradise in the sky. In June, the first month of winter, the atmosphere was pervaded by these ghosts, to whom the chilliness of death still clung. For days together their thronging shapes hid the sun, dimming the sky and spreading among men the heaviness and oppression of spirits which are characteristic of the season. But with the early days of August, when the coral-tree puts forth its blood-red blossoms and the sky grows mottled with light fleecy clouds, the ghosts of the brave prepare to take flight for heaven. Soon the sky is cloudless, the weather bright and warm. The ghosts have fled away, and the living resume their wonted avocations in quiet and comfort.[1]

In their celestial home the spirits of the slain are immortal. There, in memory of their deeds on earth, they dance their old war dances over again, decked with gay flowers—the white gardenia, the yellow *bua*, the golden fruit of the pandanus, and the dark crimson, bell-like blossom of the native laurel, intertwined with myrtle ; and from their blissful heights they look down with pity and disgust on the wretched souls in Avaiki entangled in the fatal net and besmeared with filth. For the spirits of the slain in battle are strong and vigorous, their bodies never having been wasted by disease ; whereas the spirits of those who die a natural death are excessively feeble and weak, like their bodies at the moment of dissolution. The natural result of such beliefs was to breed an utter contempt for a violent death, nay even a desire to seek it. Many stories are told of aged warriors, scarcely able to hold a spear, who have insisted on being led to the battlefield in the hope of finding a soldier's death and gaining a soldier's paradise.[2]

Beliefs of the same general character concerning the fate of the dead prevailed in other islands of the Hervey Group. Thus in Rarotonga the great meeting-place of the ghosts was at Tuoro, facing the sunset. There at a stately tree, called "the Weeping Laurel," the disembodied spirits used to bewail their hard fate. If no pitying spirit sent him back

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 162 *sq.*

[2] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 163 *sq.*

to life, the ghost had to scramble up a branch of an ancient *bua* tree which grew on the spot. Should the bough break under his weight, the ghost was precipitated into the net which Muru had spread out for him in a natural circular hollow of the rock. A lively ghost might break the meshes of the net and escape for a while, but passing on to the outer edge of the reef, in the hope of traversing the ocean, he inevitably fell into another net artfully concealed by Akaanga. From this second net escape was impossible. The demons drew the captive ghosts out of the nets, and ruthlessly dashing out their brains on the sharp coral they carried off the shattered victims in triumph to devour them in the lower world. Ghosts from Ngatangiia ascended the noble mountain range which stretches across the island, dipping into the sea at Tuoro. Inexpressibly weary and sad was this journey over a road which foot of living wight had never trod. The departed spirits of this tribe met at a great iron-wood tree, of which some branches were green and others dead. The souls that trod on the green branches came back to life; but the souls that crawled on to the dead boughs were at once caught in the net either of Muru or of Akaanga.[1]

In Rarotonga, as in Mangaia, the lot of warriors who died in battle was much happier than that of the poor wretches who had the misfortune to die quietly in bed or to be otherwise ignominiously snuffed out. The gallant ghosts were said to join Tiki, who in Rarotonga appears to have been a dead warrior, whereas in Mangaia, as we saw, Tiki was a dead woman. In the Rarotongan Hades, which also went by the name of Avaiki, this Tiki sat at the threshold of a very long house built with walls of reeds, and surrounded by shrubs and flowers of fadeless bloom and never-failing perfume. Each ghost on his arrival had to make an offering to the warder Tiki, who, thus propitiated, admitted him to the house. There, sitting at their ease, eating, drinking, dancing, or sleeping, the brave of past ages dwelt in unwithering beauty and perpetual youth; there they welcomed newcomers, and there they told the story of their heroic exploits on earth and fought

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, pp. 169 *sq.*; *id.*, "Mangaia (Hervey Islands)," *op. cit.* p. 346.

their old battles over again. But ghosts who had nothing to give to Tiki were compelled to stay outside in rain and darkness for ever, shivering with cold and hunger, watching with envious eyes the joyous revels of the inmates, and racked with the vain desire of being admitted to share them.[1]

Such beliefs in the survival of the soul after death may have nerved the warrior with fresh courage in battle; but they can have contributed but little to the happiness and consolation of ordinary people, who could apparently look forward to nothing better in the life hereafter than being cooked and eaten by a hideous hag.

[1] W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 170; John Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 476 *sq.*

CHAPTER V

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE SOCIETY ISLANDERS

§ 1. *The Society Islands*

THE Society Islands are a large and scattered archipelago in the South Pacific, situated within 16° and 18° of South latitude, and between 148° and 155° of West longitude. They lie some three hundred miles from the Hervey or Cook Islands, from which they are separated by the open sea. The islands form a chain nearly two hundred miles in length, extending from north-west to south-east, and fall into two groups, an eastern and a western, which, on account of the prevailing wind, are known respectively as the Windward and Leeward Islands. The Windward or eastern group includes Eimeo or Moörea in the west, Maitea in the east, and Tahiti, the principal island of the whole archipelago, in the centre. In the Leeward or western group the chief islands are Huahine, Raiatea, Tahaa, and Borabora. The islands appear to have been first discovered by the Spanish navigator Fernandez de Quiros in 1606 or 1607, but after him they were lost sight of till 1767, when they were rediscovered by Wallis. A few years later they were repeatedly visited by Captain Cook, who gave the first full and accurate description of the islands and their inhabitants.[1]

The islands, with the exception of a few flat lagoon

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 6 *sq.*; A. v. H[ügel], "Tahiti," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, xxiii. 22, 24; C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans*, ii. 151 *sqq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 510. As to Wallis's discovery of the islands see J. Hawkesworth, *Voyages*, i. (London, 1773) pp. 433 *sqq.*; R. Kerr, *General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels*, xii. (Edinburgh, 1814) pp. 164 *sqq.*

islands, are of volcanic formation, high and mountainous, consisting for the most part of a central peak or peaks of bold and striking outline, which descend in steep ridges towards the sea, sometimes reaching the coast, but oftener leaving a broad stretch of flat and very fertile land between their last slopes and the beach. Between the ridges lie deep and beautiful valleys, watered by winding streams and teeming with luxuriant vegetation. The rocks of which the islands consist are all igneous, chiefly trachyte, dolerite, basalt, and lava. They are considered by geologists to present perhaps the most wonderful and instructive example of volcanic rocks to be seen on the globe. Yet, though the islands are judged to be of comparatively recent formation, there are no traces of volcanic action in them at the present time. The craters have disappeared: hot springs do not exist; and earthquakes are rare.[1]

The Society Islands, and Tahiti in particular, are famous for the beauty of their natural scenery; indeed, by general consent they appear to rank as the fairest islands in the Pacific. Travellers vie with each other in praise of their enchanting loveliness. Tahiti, the largest island of the group, may be taken as typical of them all. It consists of two almost circular islands united by a very low and narrow neck of land: the northern and larger island is known as Tahiti the Great (Tahiti nui), the southern and smaller island is known as Tahiti the Little (Tahiti iti). In the centre of each island the mountains rise in craggy peaks, sometimes in the shape of pyramids or sugar-loaves, their rocky sides clothed with every variety of verdure, and enlivened here and there by cataracts falling from lofty cliffs, while the shore is washed by the white-crested waves of the Pacific breaking in foam on the coral reefs or dashing in spray on the beach. The scene is especially striking when beheld for the first time from the sea at sunrise on a fine morning. Then the happy combination of land and water, of precipices and plains, of umbrageous trees drooping their pendent boughs over the sea, and distant mountains shown in sublime outline and richest hues, all blended in the harmony

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 11 *sqq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.* ii. 152 *sq.*; A. v. H[ügel], *op. cit.* p. 22; F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* p. 513.

of nature, produces in the beholder sensations of admiration and delight. The inland scenery is of a different character, but not less impressive. There the prospect is occasionally extensive, but more frequently circumscribed. There is, however, a startling boldness in the towering piles of basalt, often heaped in picturesque confusion near the source or margin of some crystal stream that flows in silence at their base, or plashes purling over the rocks that obstruct its bed; and there is the wildness of romance about the deep and lonely glens, from which the mountains rise like the steep sides of a natural amphitheatre till they seem to support the clouds that rest upon their summits. In the character of the teeming vegetation, too, from the verdant moss that drapes the rocks to the rich foliage of the bread-fruit tree, the luxuriance of the pandanus, and the waving plumes of the cocoanut palm, all nurtured by a prolific soil and matured by the genial heat of a tropical climate, there is enough to arrest the attention and to strike the imagination of the wanderer, who, in the unbroken silence that reigns in these pleasing solitudes, may easily fancy himself astray in fairyland and treading enchanted ground.[1]

§ 2. *The Islanders and their Mode of Life*

The islanders are, or were at the date of their discovery by Europeans, fine specimens of the Polynesian race, being tall, well-proportioned, and robust. Captain Cook described them as of the largest size of Europeans. Their complexion varies from olive to bronze and reddish-brown, frequently presenting a hue intermediate between the yellow of the Malay and the copper-colour of the American Indians. The hair is shining black or dark brown, usually straight, but often soft and curly; never lank and wiry like that of the American Indians, and only in rare cases woolly or frizzly

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 14-18. Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 172 *sqq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1777), i. 253 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 321 *sqq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1831), i. 58 *sq.*, 108 *sqq.*, 136 *sqq.*, 206 *sq.*, 234 *sq.*, 316 *sq.*, 555 *sq.*, ii. 51-53, 59-61; F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* pp. 511 *sqq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.* ii. 152 *sq.*; A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder* (Berlin, 1900), pp. 29 *sqq.*

like that of the Papuans. The men have beards, which they used to wear in a variety of fashions, always, however, plucking out the greater part. The shape of the face is comely, and the facial angle is often as perpendicular as in Europeans. The cheek-bones are not high; the nose is either straight or aquiline, often accompanied by a fulness about the nostrils; it is seldom flat, though it was formerly the practice of mothers and nurses to press the nostrils of the female children, a broad flat nose being by many regarded as a beauty. The mouth in general is well formed, though the lips are sometimes large and protuberant, yet never so much as to resemble the lips of negroes; the chin is usually prominent. The general aspect of the face very seldom presents any likeness to the Tartar or Mongolian cast of countenance; while the profile frequently bears a most striking resemblance to that of Europeans. A roundness and fulness of figure, not usually extending to corpulency, is characteristic of the race, especially of the women. In general physique they resemble the Sandwich Islanders and Tonga Islanders; according to Ellis, they are more robust than the Marquesans, but inferior in size and strength to the Maoris.[1]

Their diet is chiefly vegetable; when Captain Cook visited the islands, the only tame animals were hogs, dogs, and poultry. Bread-fruit, taro, yams, bananas, and cocoanuts are their staple food; the bread-fruit in particular has been called their staff of life. Taro and yams are carefully cultivated by the natives, and they also grow the sweet potato as an article of food, though to a less extent than the other two roots; in quality the sweet potato of Tahiti is far inferior to that of the Sandwich Islands. The sea affords a great variety of fish and shell-fish, which the natives catch and eat; nothing that the sea produces is said to come amiss to them. Hogs and dogs were in olden times the only quadrupeds whose flesh was eaten by the Tahitians; but for the most part they rarely tasted meat, subsisting almost exclusively on a diet of fruit, vegetables, and fish.[2]

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 175 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 79 *sqq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.* ii. 171; F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* pp. 513 *sq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 185 *sq.*, vi. 139 *sqq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 36 *sqq.*, 70 *sqq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Îles du Grand Ocean* (Paris, 1837), ii. 93 *sqq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.* ii. 171 *sq.*

The common houses were of an oblong shape, usually from eighteen to twenty-four feet in length, by eleven feet in width, the long sides being parallel to each other, but the two ends commonly rounded, especially in the houses of chiefs. The thatched roofs were supported on three parallel rows of wooden posts, and there being no outer walls and no partitions, the wind blew freely through them. The floor was covered with mats, forming a single cushion, on which the people sat by day and slept at night. In some houses there was a single stool appropriated to the use of the master of the family; otherwise an ordinary dwelling contained little or no furniture except a few small blocks of wood, hollowed out on the upper surface so as to form head-rests or pillows. The houses served chiefly as dormitories and as shelters in rain: the people took their meals in the open air. Chiefs, however, often owned houses of much larger dimensions, which were built and maintained for them at the common expense of the district. Some of these chiefly dwellings were two hundred feet long, thirty feet broad, and twenty feet high under the ridge; one of them, belonging to the king, measured three hundred and seventy feet in length. We read of houses which could contain two or three thousand people;[1] and of one particular house in Tahiti we are informed that it was no less than three hundred and ninety-seven feet long by forty-eight feet broad, and that the roof was supported in the middle by twenty wooden pillars, each twenty-one feet high, while the sides or eaves of the roof rested on one hundred and twenty-four pillars, each ten feet high. A wooden wall or fence enclosed the whole. This great house was used for the celebration of feasts, which sometimes lasted for days together, and at which nearly all the hogs in the island were consumed.[2]

Like all the Polynesians down to the date of their discovery by Europeans, the inhabitants of the Society Islands were totally ignorant of the use and even of the existence of the metals, and they had to employ substitutes, chiefly stone and bone, for the manufacture of their tools and weapons.

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 181 *sqq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 341 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 170 *sqq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 84 *sqq.* As to the wooden head-rests see W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 188 *sq.*

[2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 213 *sq.*

Of their tools Captain Cook gives the following account: "They have an adze of stone; a chisel, or gouge, of bone, generally that of a man's arm between the wrist and elbow; a rasp of coral; and the skin of a sting-ray, with coral sand, as a filer or polisher. This is a complete catalogue of their tools, and with these they build houses, construct canoes, hew stone, and fell, cleave, carve, and polish timber. The stone which makes the blade of their adzes is a kind of basaltes, of a blackish or grey colour, not very hard, but of considerable toughness: they are of different sizes; some, that are intended for felling, weigh from six to eight pounds; others, that are used for carving, not more than so many ounces; but it is necessary to sharpen both almost every minute; for which purpose, a stone and a cocoa-nut shell full of water are always at hand. Their greatest exploit, to which these tools are less equal than to any other, is felling a tree; this requires many hands, and the constant labour of several days."[1] The earliest missionaries expressed their astonishment that with such simple tools the natives could carve so neatly and finish so smoothly; our most ingenious workmen, they declared, could not excel them.[2]

The principal manufacture of the Society Islanders was the making of the cloth which they used for their garments. The material for the cloth was furnished by the bark of several trees, including the paper-mulberry, the bread-fruit tree, and a species of wild fig-tree. Having been stripped from the tree and soaked in water, the bark was spread out on a beam and beaten with heavy wooden mallets, till it was reduced to the proper degree of thinness and flexibility. The finest and most valuable kind of cloth was made chiefly, and sometimes entirely, from the bark of the paper-mulberry and was bleached pure white. But vegetable dyes were also commonly employed to stain the cloth with a variety of hues arranged in patterns. The favourite colours were a brilliant scarlet and a bright yellow; Captain Cook described the scarlet as exceedingly beautiful, brighter and more delicate than any we have in Europe; it was produced by a mixture of the juices of two vegetables, the fruit of a species of fig

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 204 *sq.* [2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 400.

and the leaves of the *Cordia sebastina* or *etou* tree. The patterns were in this bright scarlet on a yellow ground; formerly they were altogether devoid of uniformity or regularity, yet exhibited a considerable degree of taste. The bales of bark-cloth were sometimes as much as two hundred yards long by four yards wide; the whole bale was in a single piece, being composed of narrow strips joined together by being beaten with grooved mallets. A chief's wealth was sometimes estimated by the number of bales which he possessed; the more valuable sort, covered with matting or cloth of an inferior sort, were generally hung from the roof of his house. The manufacture of cloth was chiefly in the hands of women; indeed it was one of their most usual employments. Even women of high rank did not disdain this form of industry; the wives and daughters of chiefs took a pride in manufacturing cloth of a superior quality, excelling that produced by common women in the elegance of the patterns or the brilliance of the dyes. Every family had a little house where the females laboured at the making of cloth; but in addition every district had a sort of public factory, consisting of a spacious house where immense quantities of cloth were produced on the occasion of festivals, the visits of great chiefs, or other solemnities. In such a factory the women would often assemble to the number of two or three hundred, and the monotonous din of their hammers falling on the bark was almost deafening; it began early in the morning, only to cease at night. Yet heard at a distance in some lonely valley the sound was not disagreeable, telling as it did of industry and peace.[1]

Among the other articles manufactured by the Society Islanders before the advent of Europeans were fine mats, baskets of many different patterns, ropes, lines, and fishing-tackle, including nets, hooks, and harpoons made of cane and pointed with hard wood. In every expedient for taking fish they are said to have been exceedingly ingenious.[2] They made bows and arrows, with which, as an amusement,

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 196 *sqq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1777), i. 276 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 389-392; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 179 *sqq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 112 *sqq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 202 *sq.*

they shot against each other, not at a mark, but to see who could shoot farthest. Like the rest of the Polynesians, they never used these weapons in war.[1]

Society among these islanders was divided into three ranks; first the royal family and nobility (*hui arii*); second, the landed proprietors, or gentry and farmers (*bue raatira*); and third, the common people (*manahune*). Of these, the landed gentry and farmers were the most numerous and influential class, constituting at all times the great body of the people and the strength of the nation, as well as of the army. The petty farmers owned from twenty to a hundred acres. Some of the great landowners possessed many hundreds of acres, and being surrounded by retainers they constituted the aristocracy of the country and imposed a restraint upon the king, who, without their co-operation, could carry but few of his measures. They also frequently acted as priests in their family temples. The common people comprised slaves and servants. The slaves were captives taken in war. Their treatment was in general mild, and if peace continued, they often regained their freedom and were allowed to return to their own country.[2]

The government of the Society Islands, like that of Hawaii, was at least in form an arbitrary monarchy. The supreme authority was vested in the king and was hereditary in his family. It partook of a sacred character, for in these islands government was closely interwoven with religion; the king sometimes personated the god and received the homage and prayers of the worshippers; at other times he officiated as high-priest and transmitted the vows and petitions of the people to the superior deities. The genealogy of the reigning family was usually traced back to the first ages of the world: in some of the islands the kings were believed to be descended from the gods: their persons were always sacred, and their families constituted the highest rank recognised by the people.[3]

Indeed, everything in the least degree connected with

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 368; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 217-220; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 148-150.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 94-98. Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 225 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 93 *sq.*

the king or queen—the cloth they wore, the houses in which they dwelt, the canoes in which they voyaged, the men who carried them when they journeyed by land—became sacred and could not be converted to common use. The very sounds in the language which composed their names could no longer be appropriated to ordinary significations. If on the accession of a king any words in the language were found to resemble his name, they were abolished and changed for others; and if any man were bold enough to continue to use them, not only he but all his relations were immediately put to death; and the same severity was exercised on any who should dare to apply the sacred name to an animal. Thus in process of time the original names of most common objects in the language underwent considerable alterations. No one might touch the body of the king or queen; nay, any person who should so much as stand over them, or pass his hand over their heads, was liable to pay for the sacrilege with the forfeiture of his life. The very ground on which the king or queen even accidentally trod became sacred; and any house belonging to a private person which they entered must for ever be vacated by the owner and either set apart for the use of the royal personages or burnt down with every part of its furniture. Hence it was a general rule that the king and queen never entered any dwellings except such as were specially dedicated to their use, and never trod on the ground in any part of the island but their own hereditary districts. In journeying they were always carried on men's shoulders.[1]

The inauguration of a king consisted in girding him with a sacred girdle (*maro ura*) of red, or red and yellow, feathers, which not only raised him to the highest earthly station, but identified him with the gods. The red feathers were taken from the images of the gods and interwoven with feathers of other colours. A human victim was sacrificed when they began to make the girdle, and another was sacrificed when it was finished; sometimes others were slaughtered at intermediate stages, one for each fresh piece

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 155 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 329; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 101 *sq.*

added to the girdle. The blood of the victims was supposed to consecrate the belt.[1]

The deification of kings in their lifetime would seem not to have been confined to Tahiti, but to have prevailed in the other islands of the Society Archipelago. We hear particularly of the divinity of the kings of Raiatea. In that island a place called Opoa is said to have been the metropolis of idolatry for all the South Pacific Islands within a compass of five hundred miles. Hither, from every shore, human victims, already slain, were sent to be offered on the altar of the war-god Oro, whose principal image was there worshipped. There, too, was the residence of the kings of the island, "who, beside the prerogatives of royalty, enjoyed divine honours, and were in fact living idols among the dead ones, being deified at the time of their accession to political supremacy here. In the latter character, we presume, it was, that these sovereigns (who always took the name of Tamatoa) were wont to receive presents from the kings and chiefs of adjacent and distant islands, whose gods were all considered tributary to the Oro of Raiatea, and their princes owing homage to its monarch, who was Oro's hereditary high-priest, as well as an independent divinity himself."[2] Of one particular monarch of this line, Tamatoa by name, we read that he "had been enrolled among the gods," and that "as one of the divinities of his subjects, therefore, the king was worshipped, consulted as an oracle, and had sacrifices and prayers offered to him."[3]

In the succession to the throne the law of primogeniture prevailed, and in accordance with a singular usage, which was invariably observed, the king regularly abdicated on the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 108 *sqq.* Compare J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 327 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 22 *sq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 526 *sq.*, ii. 56. Another singular ceremony observed at the installation of a king was this. The king advanced into the sea and bathed there. Thither he was followed by the priest of Oro bearing a branch plucked from a sacred tree that grew within the precincts of the temple. While the king was bathing, the priest struck him on the back with the holy bough, at the same time invoking the great god Taaoroa. This ceremony was designed to purify the monarch from any defilement or guilt he might previously have contracted. See W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 110.

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 529 *sq.*

[3] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 524.

birth of his first son and became a subject of his infant offspring. The child was at once proclaimed the sovereign of the people: the royal title was conferred on him; and his own father was the first to do him homage by saluting his feet and declaring him king. The public herald was despatched round the island with the flag of the infant monarch: in every district he unfurled the banner and proclaimed the accession of the youthful sovereign. The insignia of royalty and the homage of the people were at once transferred from the father to the child: the royal domains and other sources of revenue were appropriated to the maintenance of the household of the infant ruler; and the father paid him all the marks of reverence and submission which he had hitherto exacted from the people. However, during the minority of his son the former king appears to have filled the office of regent. This remarkable rule of succession was not limited to the royal house, but prevailed also in noble families: no sooner did a baron's wife give birth to a child than the baron was reduced to the rank of a private man, though he continued to administer the estate for the benefit of the infant, to whom all the outward marks of honour were now transferred.[1]

§ 3. *The Religion of the Society Islanders*

If religion consists essentially in a fear of gods, the natives of the Society Islands were a very religious people, for they believed in a multitude of gods and stood in constant dread of them. "Whatever attention," says Ellis, "the Tahitians paid to their occupations or amusements, and whatever energies have been devoted to the prosecution of their barbarous wars, the claims of all were regarded as inferior to those of their religion. On this every other was dependent, while each was alike made subservient to its support."[2] "No people in the world, in ancient or modern times, appear to have been more superstitious than the

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 225 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 99 *sq.* Compare J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 180 *sq.*, 327, 330, 333; J. Turnbull, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1813), pp. 134, 137, 188 *sq.*, 344; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 13 *sq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 321; compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 417.

South Sea Islanders, or to have been more entirely under the influence of dread from imaginary demons, or supernatural beings. They had not only their major, but their minor demons, or spirits, and all the minute ramifications of idolatry." [1] "Religious rites were connected with almost every act of their lives. An *ubu* or prayer was offered before they ate their food, when they tilled their ground, planted their gardens, built their houses, launched their canoes, cast their nets, and commenced or concluded a journey. The first fish taken periodically on their shores, together with a number of kinds regarded as sacred, were conveyed to the altar. The first-fruits of their orchards and gardens were also *taumaha*, or offered, with a portion of their live-stock, which consisted of pigs, dogs, and fowls, as it was supposed death would be inflicted on the owner or the occupant of the land, from which the god should not receive such acknowledgment." [2]

Different gods were worshipped in different islands, and even in different parts of the same island,[3] and if a deity failed to answer the expectations of his worshippers, they did not scruple to change him for another. In Captain Cook's time the people of Tiaraboo (Tairaboo), the southern peninsula of Tahiti, discarded their two old divinities and adopted in their place Oraa, the god of the island of Bolabola (Borabora), apparently because the people of Bolabola had lately been victorious in war ; and as, after this change of deity, they themselves proved very successful in their operations against their enemies, they imputed the success entirely to their new god, who, they literally said, fought their battles.[4] Again, when the prayers and offerings for the recovery of a sick chief were unavailing, the god was regarded as inexorable, and was usually banished from the temple, and his image destroyed.[5]

The pantheon and mythology of the Society Islands were of the usual Polynesian type ; some of their chief gods were recognised and worshipped under the same names,

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 361.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 350.

[3] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 148, 160; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World* (London, 1778), p. 539.

[4] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 148 *sq.*

[5] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 350.

with dialectical differences, in other islands of the Pacific. In the beginning they say that all things were in a state of chaos or darkness, from which the principal deities, including Taaroa, Oro, and Tane, at last emerged. Hence these high gods were said to be born of Night or the primaeval darkness (*Po*). Among them all the first place in time and dignity was generally assigned to Taaroa, who appears in other parts of Polynesia as Tanaroa, Tangaroa, Tagaloa, and so on. By some he was spoken of as the progenitor of the other gods and as the creator of the heavens, the earth, and sea, as well as of men, beasts, birds, and fishes; but others were of opinion that the land or the world had existed before the gods. Oro, the great national god of Tahiti, Raiatea, and other islands, was believed to be a son of Taaroa.[1] To these three great gods, Oro, Tane, and Taaroa, the people sacrificed in great emergencies, when the deities were thought to be angry. At such times the wrath of the god was revealed to a priest, who, wrapt up like a ball in a bundle of cloth, spoke in a sharp, shrill, squeaky voice, saying, "I am angry; bring me hogs, kill a man, and my anger will be appeased."[2]

Oro is sometimes described as the war-god.[3] The great seat of his worship was at Opoa in the island of Raiatea: his principal image was worshipped there "with the most bloody and detestable rites"; and thither human victims, ready slain, were sent from every shore to be offered on his altar.[4] Sometimes, instead of the bodies of the slain, only their jaw-bones were sent to decorate the temple of Oro at Opoa; long strings of these relics might be seen hanging about the sacred edifice.[5] In the small island of Tahaa, off

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 322 *sqq.* Compare J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 539 *sqq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 149 *sqq.*; J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 343 *sqq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 523 (as to Taaroa); J. A. Moerenhout, *Voyages aux Îles du Grand Ocean*, i. 416 *sqq.*, 436 *sqq.*, 442 *sq.* As to Taaoroa and his counterparts in Polynesian mythology, see H. Hale, *United States Exploring Expedition, Ethnography and Philology*, p. 22; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 463 *sq.*, *s.v.* "Tangaroa."

[2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 167 *sq.*

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 114, 529.

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 529.

[5] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* ii. 14. In a long house in the southern part of Tahiti, Captain Cook

Raiatea, there was a temple (*marae*) dedicated to Oro and his two daughters. It belonged to the king and "was upheld for the convenience of finding a pretext to get rid, from time to time, of obnoxious persons, of both sexes; the men slain by assassination, or in war, being presented to the male idol, and the women to his female progeny, who were held to be as cruelly delighted with blood as their parent. But the human sacrifices brought hither were not allowed to remain and infect the atmosphere. When they had lain upon the altar till they became offensive, the carcases were transported to Oro's metropolitan temple at Opoa, in Raiatea, which was the common Golgotha of his victims."[1]

Oro was said to have instituted the notorious Society of the Areois, a licentious fraternity of strolling players and mountebanks, who roamed about in troupes from island to island, everywhere entertaining the populace by their shows, which comprised recitations, songs, dramatic performances, wrestling matches, and especially dances, which were often of a lascivious character.[2] These exhibitions, which were witnessed by crowds and appear to have been the most popular amusement of the islanders, were given in large, substantial, sometimes highly ornamented, houses, which were erected chiefly for the purpose of lodging these itinerant performers, and providing them with suitable places for their performances.[3] The first missionaries describe how, in a long native house where they lodged for the night, they saw the Areois men and women dancing and singing till near midnight: so great were their numbers that they made the house appear like a village.[4] Sometimes, apparently, the

saw, at one end of it, a semicircular board, from which hung fifteen human jaw-bones, apparently fresh; not one of them wanted a tooth. He was told that they "had been carried away as trophies, the people here carrying away the jaw-bones of their enemies, as the Indians of North America do the scalps." See J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 152, 160.

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 549.

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 193-195; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 411-414; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 128-135; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 56, 57, 59, 65 *sq.*, 153, 154, 174, 194 *sq.*, 209, 331, 335; J. Turnbull, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1813), p. 364; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 326-328; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 229-247; Waitz-Gerland, *Anthropologie*, vi. 363-369.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 236 *sq.*

[4] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 209.

performances took place in front of the house, the musicians, singers, and reciters occupying a sort of stage, while the actors or dancers performed on a place marked out for them on the ground or on the floor.[1] The subject of their songs or recitations was often a legend of the gods, or of some distinguished member of the Society, which was chanted or recited by the performers in chorus seated in a circle on the ground, while the leader stood in the centre and introduced the recitation with a sort of prologue, accompanied by antic gestures and attitudes.[2] In these recitals the tales often turned on romantic and diverting episodes in the lives of ancestors or of deities. "Many of these were very long, and regularly composed, so as to be repeated verbatim, or with such illustrations only as the wit or fancy of the narrator might have the skill to introduce. Their captain on public occasions, was placed cross-legged on a stool seven feet high, with a fan in his hand, in the midst of the circle of laughing or admiring auditors, whom he delighted with his drollery, or transported with his grimaces, being, in fact, the merry-andrew of the corps, who, like a wise fool, well knew how to turn his folly to the best account."[3]

The Society of the Areois was wealthy and highly esteemed; members were drawn from all social ranks and greatly prided themselves on belonging to it.[4] Indeed, they were regarded as a sort of superhuman beings, closely allied to the gods, and were treated with a corresponding degree of veneration by many of the vulgar and ignorant.[5] They were divided into seven ranks or classes, the members of which were distinguished from each other by their tattoo marks; the greater the amount of the tattooing, the higher the rank of the person.[6] Admission to the Society was attended by a variety of ceremonies; a protracted noviciate followed, and it was only by progressive advancement that any were promoted to the higher dignities. It was imagined

[1] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 133 *sq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 235.

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 327 *sq.*

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 239, 245; G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 130; J. R. Forster, *op. cit.* pp. 411 *sq.*

[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 239, 244; J. Turnbull, *op. cit.* p. 364; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 492.

[6] G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 128 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 238; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 491.

that those who became Areois were prompted or inspired by the gods to take this step. A candidate for admission, therefore, repaired to one of the public exhibitions in that apparent state of frenzy which is commonly supposed to indicate divine inspiration. His face was dyed scarlet; his hair was perfumed and adorned with flowers, and he wore a girdle of yellow plantain leaves. Thus arrayed, he rushed through the crowd assembled round the house in which the actors or dancers were performing, and, leaping into the circle, joined with seeming frantic wildness in the dance or pantomime. If the Society approved of him, they appointed him to wait as a servant on the principal Areois, and after a period of probation he might be inducted into the Society as a full-fledged member. At his induction, which took place in a great assembly of the body, the candidate received a new name, by which he was thenceforth known in the Society.[1] When a member was advanced from a lower to a higher grade, the ceremony was performed at a public festival which all the members of the Society in the island were expected to attend. The candidate was then taken to a temple, where he was solemnly anointed with fragrant oil on the forehead, and offered a pig to the god.[2]

When a member of the Society died his body was conveyed by the Areois to the grand temple, where the bones of the kings were deposited. There the priest of Oro, standing over the corpse, offered a long prayer to his god. This prayer, and the ceremonies accompanying it, were designed to divest the body of all the sacred and mysterious influence which the deceased was thought to have received from the god at the moment when, in the presence of the idol, the perfumed oil had been sprinkled on him, and he had been raised to the order or rank in which he died. By this act they supposed that the sacred influence was restored to Oro, by whom it had been imparted. The body was then buried, like that of a common man, within the precincts of the temple, in which the mortal remains of chiefs were interred.[3] But if for any reason the corpse were buried in unconsecrated

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 239 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 491 *sqq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 241 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 493 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 244 *sq.*

ground, the ghost would appear to a survivor next day and remonstrate with him, saying, "You have buried me in common earth, and so long as I lie there, I cannot go to heaven. You must bury me with ceremonies, and in holy ground." After that the corpse was disinterred, and having been doubled up by tying the arms to the shoulders and the knees to the trunk, it was buried in a sitting posture in a hole so shallow that the earth barely covered the head. This was esteemed the most honourable form of sepulture, and was principally confined to personages of high rank.[1]

The Areoi Society comprised women as well as men,[2] but the accounts given of the proportion of the sexes and their relations to each other are conflicting. According to one account, the male members outnumbered the women as five to one.[3] The first missionaries reported that the Areois were said to have each two or three wives, whom they exchanged with each other.[4] According to Cook, every woman was common to every man[5]; and Turnbull affirmed that the community of women was the very principle of their union.[6] On the other hand, the naturalist George Forster, who accompanied Captain Cook, observes: "We have been told a wanton tale of promiscuous embraces, where every woman is common to every man: but when we enquired for a confirmation of this story from the natives, we were soon convinced that it must, like many others, be considered as the groundless invention of a traveller's gay fancy."[7] Again, Ellis observes that, "although addicted to every kind of licentiousness themselves, each Areoi had his own wife, who was also a member of the Society; and so jealous were they in this respect, that improper conduct towards the wife of one of their own number, was sometimes punished with death."[8] Yet the same writer speaks of "the mysteries of iniquity, and acts of more than bestial degradation" to which the Areois were at times addicted; and he says that "in

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 273 *sq.*

[2] G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 128.

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 326.

[4] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 174.

[5] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 193 *sq.*

[6] J. Turnbull, *Voyage round the World*, p. 364.

[7] G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 132.

[8] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 239.

some of their meetings, they appear to have placed their invention on the rack, to discover the worst pollutions of which it was possible for man to be guilty, and to have striven to outdo each other in the most revolting practices."[1]

It was a rule of the Society that no member should have any children; hence the first injunction given to a new member was to murder his offspring. Any infant that might afterwards be born to him was strangled at birth.[2] If a woman spared her child and could induce a man to father it, "both the man and the woman, being deemed by this act to have appropriated each other, are ejected from the community, and forfeit all claim to the privileges and pleasures of Arreoy for the future; the woman from that time being distinguished by the term *whannow-now*, 'bearer of children,' which is here a term of reproach."[3] The pretext alleged by the Areois for this cruel practice was that, on the institution of the Society by the god Oro, the first two members, Orotetefa and Urutetefa, brothers of the god, had been celibate and childless, and that therefore the members of the Society were bound to imitate them by being also without offspring.[4]

In the constant repetition of their often obscene exhibitions the Areois passed their lives, sailing from island to island or strolling from one chief's house to that of another, where they renewed the same round of dances, wrestlings, and pantomimic performances.[5] But the labour and drudgery of dancing and performing for the amusement of the spectators devolved chiefly on the lowest members of the Society, who were the principal actors in all their shows, while the higher orders, though they plastered themselves with charcoal and stained themselves scarlet like their humbler brethren, were generally careful not to contribute to the public hilarity by

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 243.

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 194; J. R. Forster, *Observations*, pp. 413 *sq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 129 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 154 *sq.*, 174, 194 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 230 *sq.*, 233, 240. Moerenhout says that when a chief was an Areoi, his first-born son was spared, but all the rest were sacrificed; but immediately afterwards he adds, with apparent inconsistency, that "the first (by which he seems to mean the principal) Areois only killed their first sons and all their daughters; the other male infants were spared." See Moerenhout, *op.cit.* i. 495, 496. These statements, so far as I have observed, are not confirmed by other writers.

[3] J. Cook, i. 194.

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 230 *sq.*, 232 *sq.*

[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 236, 237.

any exhausting efforts of their own. Thus they led a life of dissipation and luxurious indolence.[1]

They seem to have moved about in great troupes. As many as seventy canoes, with more than seven hundred of these vagabonds on board, have been seen steering from island to island.[2] The approach of such a fleet to the shore with drums beating, flutes playing, and streamers floating on the wind, was a picturesque sight, and as the canoes neared the land the dancers might be seen jigging it on stages erected on board, while the voices of the singers mingled with the roll of the drums, the shrill music of the flutes, and the roar of the surf on the beach in a confused but not unmelodious babel of sound.[3]

On landing in an island their first business was to take a small sucking-pig to the temple and present it to the god as a thank-offering to him for having brought them safe to shore. This, we are told, was the only sacrifice ever offered in token of gratitude by any of the South Sea Islanders to their imaginary divinities.[4] While they were everywhere welcomed by the vulgar for the merriment they carried with them, and were everywhere countenanced and liberally entertained by the kings and chiefs, who found them convenient tools of fraud and oppression, they were not received with equal enthusiasm by the farmers, who had to furnish them with provisions, and who durst not refuse them anything, however unreasonable and extortionate their demands. For the Areois lived on the fat of the land. When they alighted, like a swarm of locusts, on a rich district, they would send out their henchmen to scour the neighbourhood and plunder the miserable inhabitants; and when they moved on to their next halting-place, the gardens which they left behind them often presented a scene of desolation and ruin.[5] Such havoc, indeed, did they spread by their feastings

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 238, 241.

[2] J. R. Forster, *Observations*, p. 412; G. Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 128.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 236 *sq.* Compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* ii. 132 *sq.* According to the latter writer there were traditions of as many as a hundred and fifty canoes sailing at once, each one seldom containing less than thirty or forty, and sometimes a hundred persons.

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 326 *sq.*

[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 237 *sq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 326-328. Compare J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 174, "Wherever they go they exercise power to seize what they want

and carousings on even a short visit of a few days, that in some parts of Tahiti the natives were compelled to abandon the fertile lowlands and retreat up the mountains, submitting to the trouble of clambering up almost inaccessible slopes and cultivating a less fruitful soil rather than expose much of the produce of their labour to the ravages of these privileged robbers.[1]

Not the least of the privileges, real or imaginary, enjoyed by the Areois was that after death their spirits were believed to pass without difficulty to that paradise of delights to which otherwise none but the noble and wealthy could hope to attain.[2]

In spite of the profligate life which the Areoi led and their addiction to a round of frivolous amusements and entertainments, it seems likely that the Society was originally founded for some serious purpose, though the accounts which have come down to us hardly enable us to determine, or even to conjecture with a fair degree of probability, what that purpose was. That its aim was religious might be inferred on general grounds, and is confirmed by the close relation in which the Society stood to the national god Oro. Not only is Oro said to have founded the Society, but before a troop of Areois set out on their peregrinations they were obliged to kill many pigs in sacrifice to him and to offer large quantities of plantains, bananas, and other fruits on his altars. Moreover, temporary shrines were erected in their canoes for the worship of Oro's two divine brothers, Orotetefa and Urutetefa, who were traditionally said to have been the first members of the Society and were regarded as its tutelary deities. In these shrines the principal symbols were a stone for each of the brothers taken from Oro's temple, and a few red feathers from the inside of his sacred image. Into these symbols the gods were supposed to enter when the priest

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from the inhabitants. They smite their hand on their breast and say '*Harre*, give,' whenever they covet any thing, and none dares deny them. They never work; live by plunder; yet are highly respected, as none but persons of rank are admitted among them." This last statement, however, is contradicted by Ellis, who says (*op. cit.* i. 239) that "the fraternity was not confined to any particular rank or grade in society, but was composed of individuals from every class."

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 197.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 245 *sq.*, 397; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 434 *sq.*

pronounced a short prayer immediately before the sailing of the fleet.[1]

We might be better able to understand the purpose and the functions of the Areoi Society if we were acquainted with the nature and meaning which the natives ascribed to the god Oro, the reputed founder of the Society; but on this subject our authorities shed little light. He is described as the war-god[2] and as "the great national idol of Raiatea, Tahiti, Eimeo, and some of the other islands," and he was said to be a son of the creator Taaroa, who at first dwelt alone up aloft, but who afterwards, with the help of his daughter Hina, created the heavens, the earth, and the sea.[3] By European writers Oro has been variously interpreted as a god of the dead or of the sun; and accordingly the Society of the Areois has been variously explained as devoted either to a cult of the Lord of the Dead for the sake of securing eternal happiness in a world beyond the grave, or to a worship of the sun-god; but the grounds alleged for either interpretation appear to be extremely slight.[4]

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 234.

[2] Above, p. 258.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 324, 325.

[4] Gerland takes the former view, Moerenhout the latter. See Waitz-Gerland, *Anthropologie*, vi. 368 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 484. The only evidence adduced by Moerenhout for his interpretation of Oro as a sun-god is a statement that in the Marquesas Islands the Areois suspended their performances and went into retreat from April or May till the vernal equinox (which in the southern hemisphere falls in September), and that during their retreat they assumed the style of mourners and bewailed the absence or death of their god, whom they called Mahoui. This Mahoui is accordingly taken by Moerenhout to be the sun and equated to Oro, the god of the Areois in the Society Islands. But Mahoui seems to be no other than the well-known Polynesian hero Maui, who can hardly have been the sun (see below, p. 286 note[5]); and Moerenhout's statement as to the annual period of mourning observed by the Areois in the Marquesas Islands is not, so far as I know, confirmed by any other writer, and must, therefore, be regarded as open to doubt. His statement and his interpretation of Oro and Mahoui were accepted by Dr. Rivers, who made them the basis of his far-reaching theory of a secret worship of the sun introduced into the Pacific by immigrants from a far northern country, who also built the megalithic monuments of Polynesia and Micronesia. See W. H. R. Rivers, "Sun-cult and Megaliths in Polynesia," *American Anthropologist*, xvii. July-September 1915, pp. 431 *sqq.* In proof of the supposed connexion between these megalithic monuments and a worship of the sun, Dr. Rivers says (p. 440) that the Areois "held their celebrations in an enclosure called *marae* or *marai*, at one end of which was situated a pyramidical structure with steps leading to a platform on which were placed the images of the gods during the religious celebrations of the people." But if by "their celebrations" Dr. Rivers means the ordinary dramatic, musical, and athletic performances of the Areois, he seems to be in error;

Perhaps a faint gleam of light may fall on the mystery of the Areois from an examination of their traditionary first members and guardian deities, the two divine brothers, Orotetefai and Urutetefai. The similarity of the names of the brothers suggests that they may have been twins; for it is a common custom to bestow either the same or a similar name on each of a pair of twins in order to indicate their close relationship to each other.[1] If they were twins, there are some grounds for thinking that they were Heavenly Twins; for their father or creator, Taaroa, seems certainly to have been a sky-god, and their mother, Hina, is by some authorities regarded as the moon; moreover, the two brothers are said to have first descended from the sky to the earth on a rainbow.[2] If the twinship of the divine brothers could be made out, it might perhaps explain some of the peculiar features of the Areoi Society. For example, their remarkable custom of not allowing any of their offspring to live; for it has been a common custom in many parts of the world to put twins to death.[3] Further, the superhuman rank accorded to the Areois becomes more intelligible on this hypothesis. For among many savage peoples twins are credited with the possession of powers superior to those of ordinary humanity; in particular, they are thought to be

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for it appears to be certain that these exhibitions were regularly given, not at the *maraes*, but in or before large houses built or specially set apart for the purpose. See above, pp. 259 *sq.*

[1] J. Rendel Harris, *The Dioscuri in the Christian Legends* (London, 1903), pp. 1 *sqq.*; *id.*, *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins* (Cambridge, 1906), pp. 58 *sqq.*; *id.*, *Boanerges* (Cambridge, 1913), pp. 291 *sqq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 230, 232. Ellis does not admit that Orotetefa and Urutetefa were, strictly speaking, the sons of Oro. He writes: "According to the traditions of the people, Taaroa created, and, by means of Hina, brought forth when full grown Orotetefa and Urutetefa. They were not his sons; *oriori* is the term employed by the people, which seems to mean *create*" (*op. cit.* i. 230). With regard to Hina (Heena), interpreted as the moon, or the goddess of the moon, see J. R. Forster, *Observations*, p. 549; G. Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 152; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 428 *sq.*, 458, 472; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 69. *s.v.* "Hina," "Hina is by far the best known of all Polynesian legendary personages. In the more easterly islands she is a goddess, and is almost certainly the Moon-goddess." Similarly Mr. E. E. V. Collocot observes that Hina "is generally regarded as the Moon-goddess, and this view was spontaneously put forward by a Tongan in conversation with me" (*Journal of the Polynesian Society*, xxx. (1921) p. 238).

[3] Abundant evidence of the custom is produced by Dr. Rendel Harris in his learned works, *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins* and *Boanerges*.

able to influence the weather for good or evil, as by causing rain or drought and the wind to blow or be still.[1] Among the Baronga of South-Eastern Africa the supposed relation of twins to the sky is very clearly marked. They call the mother of twins by a name which means "Heaven" (*Tilo*), and consistently they style the twins themselves "Children of Heaven" (*Bana ba Tilo*).[2] The mother is even said to have "made Heaven," to have "carried Heaven," and to have "ascended to Heaven."[3] The connexion which is believed to exist between her and the twins on the one side and the sky on the other is brought out plainly in the customs which the Baronga observe for the purpose of procuring rain in time of drought. Thus they will take a mother of twins, put her in a hole, and pour on her water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breast. This is thought to make the rain fall.[4] Or again, in order to get rain, the women will strip themselves naked except for a girdle and head-dress of grass, and thus attired will go in procession, headed by a mother of twins, and pour water on the graves of twins. And if the body of a twin has been buried in dry ground, they will dig it up and bury it again near a river; for the grave of a twin, in their opinion, should always be wet. Thus they hope to draw down rain on the thirsty ground.[5] Again, when a thunderstorm is raging and lightning threatens to strike a village, the Baronga will say to a twin, "Help us! you are a Child of Heaven! You can therefore cope with Heaven; it will hear you when you speak." So the child goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven as follows: "Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far away." When the thunderstorm is over, the child is thanked for its services. The mother of twins is also supposed to be able to help in the same way, for has she not, as the natives express it,

[1] *The Golden Bough*, Part I., *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, i. 262 *sqq*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga* (Neuchâtel, 1898), p. 412; *id.*, *Life of a South African Tribe* (Neuchâtel, 1912–1913), ii. 394.

[3] H. A. Junod, *Life of a South African Tribe*, ii. 398.

[4] H. A. Junod, *Life of a South African Tribe*, ii. 399.

[5] H. A. Junod, *Les Ba-ronga*, pp. 417 *sq.*; *id.*, *Life of a South African Tribe*, ii. 296.

ascended to Heaven? They say that she can speak with Heaven, and that she is at it or in it.[1] Among the Kpelle, a negro tribe of Liberia, twins are regarded as born magicians, and as such are treated with respect, and people sometimes make them presents in order to ensure their goodwill; in doing so they are careful never to make a present to the one twin without the other, and the twin who was born last gets his present first, for he is regarded as the first-born. Twins are thought by the Kpelle to do wonders; they even say that "a twin surpasses every medicine-man."[2] Among the Fan or Fang, a tribe of the Cameroons in West Africa, there is a curious superstition that a twin ought not to see a rainbow. Should he by accident have caught sight of one, he must shave his eyebrows and dye the place of the one black and the place of the other red.[3] This superstition seems to imply a special relation between twins and the sky, and it reminds us of the Tahitian tradition that the two divine brothers, the first members of the Areoi Society, descended to earth on a rainbow.[4]

Another notion about twins which may possibly help to throw light on some of the practices of the Areoi Society, is that they or their parents or both are endowed with a fertilising or prolific virtue, which enables them to multiply animals or plants and thereby to increase the food supply. Thus, for example, some tribes of Northern Rhodesia keep pigeons in their villages, and in erecting a pigeon-cote they take care that the first stakes "are driven in by a woman who has borne twins, in order, they say, that the pigeons may multiply."[5] Some Bantu tribes of this region ascribe a similar virtue to both the father and the mother of twins.

[1] H. A. Junod, *Life of a South African Tribe*, ii. 399 *sq.*

[2] D. Westermann, *Die Kpelle, ein Negerstamm in Liberia* (Göttingen, 1921), pp. 68, 212, 355. The Bambara, another tribe of West Africa, similarly regard the last-born of twins as the elder of the two. See Jos. Henry, *Les Bambara* (Münster i. W., 1910), p. 98. So, too, with the Mossi of the Sudan. See E. Mangin, "Les Mossi," *Anthropos*, x.-xi. (1915–1916) p. 192.

[3] L. Martrou, "Les 'Eki' des Fang," *Anthropos*, i. (1906) p. 751; H. Trilles, *Le Totémisme chez les Fân* (Münster i. W., 1912), p. 593. Compare H. A. Junod, *Life of a South African Tribe*, ii. 400, note [1], who reports the same superstition among the Fan on the testimony of his wife, who was for years a missionary in the tribe.

[4] Above, p. 267.

[5] C. Gouldsbury and H. Sheane, *The Great Plateau of Northern Nigeria* (London, 1911), pp. 307 *sq.*

They think that such parents exert a beneficial or prolific influence at laying the foundations of pigeon-cotes, chicken-houses, goat-pens, or any other building used for the purposes of breeding; a certain woman who had borne twins thrice was lately in great request at these functions.[1] The Zulus think that all goats belonging to a twin bring forth young in couples.[2]

In the Central District of Busoga, Central Africa, when a woman has given birth to twins, the people of her clan do not sow any seed until the twins have been brought to the field. A pot of cooked grain is set before the children with a cake of sesame and all the seed that is to be sown. The food is eaten by the assembled people, and afterwards the field is sown in presence of the twins; the plot is then said to be the field of the twins. The mother of twins must sow her seed before any person of the clan will sow his or hers.[3] These customs seem clearly to imply a belief that twins and their mother possess a special power of fertilising the seed. Among the Baganda of Central Africa twins were supposed to be sent by Mukasa, the great god whose blessing on the crops and on the people was ensured at an annual festival. The twins were thought to be under the protection of the god, and they bore his name, the boys being called Mukasa and the girls Namukasa. And a series of customs observed by the parents of twins among the Baganda indicates in the plainest manner a belief that they were endowed with a fertilising virtue which extended, not only to the crops and the cattle, but also to human beings. Thus the parents of twins were supposed to make people fruitful by sprinkling them with a mixture of water and clay from pots, of which each of the parents had one. Again, some time after the birth the parents used to make a round of visits to relations and friends, taking the twins with them. At every house they danced, the father wearing a crown made from a certain creeper, and the mother wearing a girdle of the same material. At these dances offerings were made to the twins. These dances were most popular

[1] D. Campbell, *In the Heart of Bantuland* (London, 1922), p. 155.
[2] Dudley Kidd, *Savage Childhood* (London, 1906), p. 49.
[3] J. Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 235.

"because the people believed that thereby they obtained a special blessing from the god Mukasa, who favoured the parents of twins, and through them dispensed blessing wherever they went." The persons whom the twins and their parents honoured with a visit "thought that, not only they themselves would be blessed and given children, but that their herds and crops also would be multiplied." A ceremony performed by the father and mother of twins over a flower of the plantain indicated in the plainest, if the grossest, fashion the belief of the Baganda that parents of twins could magically fertilise the plantains which form the staple food of the people. No wonder, then, that among them a mother of twins is deemed a source of blessing to the whole community, and that for some time after the birth both she and the father were sacred and wore a distinctive dress to prevent any one from touching them. The father, in particular, "could do what he liked, because he was under the protection of the god"; for example, he was free to enter anybody's garden and to take the produce at will. Special drums, too, were made for the parents, one for the father and one for the mother; and for some time after the birth these were beaten continually both by day and by night.[1]

Among the Hos of Togo, in West Africa, in like manner, special drums are beaten for the parents of twins, and the parents dance publicly to the music in the main street of the village, after going nine times round it. Some days later the parents go the round of all the Ho towns, everywhere executing the same dance to the same music at noon; but should one of the twins have died in the meantime, the parents dance at night. It is believed that, if the customary rites were not performed at the birth of twins, the parents of the twins would be crippled. Curiously enough, the drums, to the music of which the parents dance, may not be beaten by any one without special reason; and no one else may dance to their music except such as have slain

[1] J. Roscoe, "Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xxxii. (1902) pp. 32-34, 80; *id.*, *The Baganda* (London, 1911), pp. 64-72. These two accounts to some extent supplement each other. I have drawn on both. As to the annual festival of the god Mukasa, see *id.*, *The Baganda*, pp. 298 *sq.*

either a man or a leopard. Among these people the birth of twins is the occasion of very great rejoicing. They say that "the road which the mother of twins goes is better than the road which the rich man goes."[1] The saying suggests that the Hos, like the Baganda, regard a mother of twins as diffusing fertility wherever she goes; and, on the analogy of the dances of parents of twins among the Baganda, we may conjecture that in like manner among the Hos the parents of twins are supposed to confer the blessing of fruitfulness on all the towns where they dance.

Among the Barundi of East Africa the birth of twins is celebrated with rites, songs, and ritual dances, which last for days and even for weeks. As soon as the news spreads, the neighbours, friends, and relations flock to the house to sing, bringing with them presents for the parents or offerings to the spirits. The amount of provisions thus accumulated is enormous, but the parents of the twins benefit little by it; the great bulk disappears as by magic among the self-invited guests. Festivity, dancing, and singing are now the order of the day. Dancers, male and female, their faces painted red and white or yellow, dance like furies in a circle for hours together, singing ritual hymns at the top of their voices, while an old sorceress besprinkles the troop with lustral water. It is commonly believed that if these rites were omitted, the twins and their parents would die. At the birth of twins it is customary to buy two black sheep or lambs and to dedicate them to the twins, one to each. These sheep are then left at liberty to run about as they like by day and night, and to enter the fields and browse at will. If one of them dies it is replaced by another. The animals are described as the guardians of the children, the receptacle or symbol of their spirits, in short, as their fetish.[2] To some extent, they are analogous to the pig which an Areoi used to offer to the god at the ceremony of his consecration; for, though sometimes the animal was killed, at other times it was liberated, and, being regarded as sacred or belonging to the god to whom it had been offered, was

[1] J. Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 202-206.

[2] J. M. M. van der Burgt, *Dictionnaire Français-Kirundi* (Bois-le-Duc, 1903), pp. 324 *sq.*; H. Meyer, *Die Barundi* (Leipzig, 1916), pp. 110 *sq.*

allowed to range the district uncontrolled till it died.[1] Among the Baluba, a tribe of the Belgian Congo, there is great joy at the birth of twins, and special ceremonies are observed on the occasion. The twins are invariably named Kyunga and Kahya, after the spirits of two ancient kings, and to these spirits the twins are consecrated. After being washed and decorated they are placed side by side in a winnowing-basket and carried by the women of the family in procession through the village, headed by the proud father. Dancing and singing they go to the ash-heap of the village. There they all rub themselves with ashes and perform another dance. After that, still led by the father of the twins, they go to the houses of the chief people, and in front of each house the father dances, while the women beat time with their hands. Wherever the procession halts, the householder is expected to come and admire the twins, to compliment the father, and to deposit a small present in the winnowing-basket.[2] Among the Herero of South-West Africa the parents of twins are looked on as sacred, and for a time they may not speak to any one, and no one may speak to them. But after the lapse of some days the family goes the round of the village, visiting three or four huts every day. The father of the twins sits down on the right side of the hut, and the inmates make him offerings of beads, oxen, and so forth. When he has thus gone the round of the village, he repairs to the neighbouring villages, where the same ceremonies are repeated. It is often a year before he returns to his own village, and when he does so he brings back with him a great quantity of offerings. Henceforth the father of the twins enjoys all the privileges of a priestly chief; he may sacrifice at the holy fire, and he may represent and even succeed the chief in the office of priest for the village. The twins themselves are eligible for the same office. If a chief dies a natural death, he is succeeded in his priestly function by his twin son; whereas the chieftainship passes to the chief's legal heir, who is properly the son of his eldest sister, and who thenceforth assumes the name of the twin. A twin is bound by no taboo; he may

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 242.

[2] Colle, *Les Baluba* (Brussels, 1913), i. 253-255.

eat of all flesh offered in sacrifice; he may drink of the milk of every holy cow, just like the chief and the priest themselves.[1]

In these cases we are not told that twins and their parents are supposed to be endowed with a power of multiplying the herds and generally of increasing the supply of food by the prolific influence which they diffuse about them; but the analogy of the customs and beliefs of the Baganda concerning the birth of twins renders the supposition probable. At least on this hypothesis we can readily understand the round of visits which the parents, or one of them, pay to the surrounding towns or villages, and the presents which are made to them. If they indeed possess a power of imparting fertility and abundance wherever they go, it is obviously in everybody's interest to be visited by them, and clearly, on the same supposition, it is everybody's duty to make some return to them for the wonderful benefits which they have conferred.

Similarly we may perhaps suppose that the rounds which the Areois went from island to island, dancing, singing, and playing their tricks wherever they stopped, were believed to quicken the fruits of the earth, and possibly also to multiply the pigs and the fish. On that assumption, the unlimited right which these vagabonds enjoyed of appropriating and consuming the produce of the gardens was probably accorded to them as a natural and proper remuneration for the inestimable services which their mere presence was believed to render to the crops. The sexual excesses, in which they appear to have indulged, would also be intelligible, if it was imagined that, on the principle of sympathetic magic, such indulgences actually promoted the multiplication and growth of plants and animals. But this explanation of the extravagant rites observed by the Areois, and of the quaint beliefs entertained concerning them, is offered only as an hypothesis for what it is worth. It may be worth while noting that among the Kpelle, a tribe of Liberia in West Africa, there is reported to exist a Secret Society of Twins,[2] but whether it

[1] J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gütersloh, 1906), pp. 96-99.

[2] D. Westermann, *Die Kpelle, ein Negerstamm in Liberia* (Göttingen, 1921), p. 228.

bears any resemblance to the Society of the Areois I do not know.

A familiar figure of the Polynesian pantheon, who meets us in the mythology of the Society Islanders, was the famous god or hero Maui. Many stories of his exploits were told in the islands. It is said that originally the sky lay flat upon the face of the earth and ocean, being held down by the legs of a huge cuttle-fish. But Maui dived into the sea, and, grappling with the monster, utterly dismembered him ; whereupon the sky flew up and expanded into the beautiful blue vault which we now see above us, with the noonday sun for the keystone of the arch.[1] Again, the natives told how, one day, sitting in his canoe, Maui let down his line with a hook at the end of it and fished up the earth, which had hitherto lain at the bottom of the sea.[2] Also he is said to have held the sun with ropes to prevent him from going too fast.[3] For it happened that Maui was hard at work, building a temple, when he perceived that the day was declining and that the night would overtake him before he had accomplished his task ; so hastily twining some ropes of coco-nut fibre, he laid hold of the sun's rays and tethered them by the ropes to a tree, so that the sun could not stir till Maui had finished the task he was at.[4] Further, Maui is said to have invented the mode of kindling fire by rubbing the point of one stick in the groove of another,[5] which was the way in which the Society Islanders regularly made fire.[6] Maui was also supposed to be the cause of earthquakes.[7] In Tahiti a curious image of Maui was seen and described by Captain Cook. "It was the figure of a man, constructed of basket-work, rudely made, but not ill-designed ; it was something more than seven feet high, and rather too bulky in proportion to its height. The wicker skeleton was completely

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 526.

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 449 *sq.*

[3] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 167.

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* ii. 40 *sq.* ; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* ii. 170 *sq.*

[5] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 526.

[6] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 141 ; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 357 ; J. Turnbull, *Voyage round the World*, p. 349 ; Wallis, in R. Kerr's *General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels*, xii. 212 ; *id.*, in J. Hawkesworth's *Voyages*, i. (London, 1773) p. 483.

[7] J. R. Forster, *Observations*, p. 540 ; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 151. These writers spell his name O-Maouwe and O-mauwee.

covered with feathers, which were white where the skin was to appear, and black in the parts which it is their custom to paint or stain, and upon the head, where there was to be a representation of hair: upon the head also were four protuberances, three in front and one behind, which we should have called horns, but which the Indians dignified with the name of *Tate Ete*, little men. The image was called Manioe, and was said to be the only one in Otaheite. They attempted to give us an explanation of its use and design, but we had not then acquired enough of their language to understand them. We learnt, however, afterwards that it was a representation of Mauwe, one of their *Eatuas*, or gods of the second class." [1]

Besides the high primaeval deities, born of the Night, the Society Islanders believed in a host of inferior divinities, many of whom were said to have been created by Taaroa, the supreme god. Thus, between the high gods and the deities of particular places or of particular professions, there was a class of intermediate deities, who were not supposed to have existed from the beginning or to have been born of Night. Their origin was veiled in obscurity, but they were often described as having been renowned men, who, after death, were deified by their descendants. They all received the homage of the people, and on all public occasions were acknowledged among the gods.[2] Again, there were many gods of the sea, among whom the principal seem to have been Tuaraatai and Ruahatu. These were generally called shark gods (*atua mao*), not that the shark was itself deemed a god, but that it was supposed to be employed by the marine gods as their minister of vengeance. It was only the large blue shark which was believed to act in this capacity; and it is said that these voracious creatures always spared a shipwrecked priest, even when they devoured his companions; nay, they would recognise a priest on board any canoe, come at his call, and retire at his bidding. A priest of one of these shark gods told Mr. Ellis that he or his father had been carried on the back of a shark from Raiatea to Huahine, a distance of twenty miles. Other gods were thought to

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 156 *sq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 326 *sq.* As to the inferior gods, see also J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 451 *sqq.*

preside over the fisheries, and to direct the shoals of fish to the coasts. Their aid was invoked by fishermen before they launched their canoes and while they were busy at sea. But these marine deities were not supposed by the people to be of equal antiquity with the great primordial gods, born of the Night (*atua fauau po*).[1] Again, there were gods of the air, who were sometimes worshipped under the figure of birds. The chief of these aerial deities were thought to be a brother and sister, who dwelt near the great rock, which is the foundation of the world. There they imprisoned the stormy winds, but sent them forth from time to time to punish such as neglected the worship of the gods. In tempests their compassion was besought by mariners tossed on the sea or by their friends on shore.[2] To the minds of the islanders there were also gods of hill and dale, of precipice and ravine. "By their rude mythology each lovely island was made a sort of fairy-land, and the spells of enchantment were thrown over its varied scenes. . . . The mountain's summit, and the fleecy mists that hang upon its brows—the rocky defile—the foaming cataract—and the lonely dell—were all regarded as the abode or resort of these invisible beings." [3]

The general name for "god" in the Society Islands, as throughout Polynesia, was *atua*.[4] The word was also applied, in the expression *oramatuas* or *oromatuas*, to the spirits of departed relatives, who were also worshipped and ranked among the deities.[5] To these we shall return presently; meantime it may not be out of place to give some notice of the worship of the other gods, since in the religion

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 327-329.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 329 *sq.* As to the worship of birds, Captain Cook says: "This island [Tahiti] indeed, and the rest that lie near it, have a particular bird, some a heron and others a king's fisher, to which they pay a peculiar regard, and concerning which they have some superstitious notions with respect to good and bad fortune, as we have of the swallow and robin-redbreast, giving them the name of *eatua*, and by no means killing or molesting them; yet they never address a petition to them, or approach them with any act of adoration." See J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 224.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 329 *sq.*, 331.

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 333 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 440 *sqq.*; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 30 *sq.*, *s.v.* "atua." Captain Cook and the first missionaries spelled the word *eatua* or *eatooa*. See J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 221, vi. 149; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 343.

[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 324 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 454 *sq.*

of the Society Islanders, as of other branches of the Polynesian race, it was closely interwoven with the worship of the dead.

§ 4. *The Temples and Images of the Gods*

The sacred place dedicated to religious worship was called a *morai*, or, as it is also spelled, a *marai* or *marae*, which may be translated "temple," though all such places were uncovered and open to the sky. The national temples, where the principal idols were deposited, consisted of large walled enclosures, some of which contained smaller inner courts. The form was frequently that of a square or a parallelogram, with sides forty or fifty feet long. The area was paved with flat stones, and two sides of it were enclosed by a high stone wall, while the front was protected by a low fence, and within rose in steps or terraces a solid pyramidical structure built of stone, which usually formed one of the narrow sides of the area, either at the western or at the eastern end. These pyramids, which were always truncated so as to form a narrow platform or ridge on their upper surface, were the most striking and characteristic feature of the *morais*; indeed the name *morai* or *marae* appears to have been sometimes confined, at least by European observers, to the pyramid. In front of the pyramid the images were kept and the altars fixed. The houses of the priests and of the keepers of the idols were erected within the enclosure.[1] Of these interesting monuments, which seemed destined to last for ages, only a few insignificant ruins survive; the

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 339 *sqq.* Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 157 *sqq.*, 217, 219, 220, 222, vi. 37 *sq.*, 41; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 543 *sqq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, i. 267, ii. 138 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 207 *sq.*, 211 *sq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 267 *sq.*, 271, 280 *sqq.*, 549, ii. 13 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 466-470; A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 111 *sqq.*; S. and K. Routledge, "Notes on some Archaeological Remains in the Society and Austral Islands," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, li. (1921) 438 *sqq.* According to J. R. Forster (*l.c.*), the *marais* (*morais*, *maraes*) "consist of a very large pile of stones, generally in the shape of an Egyptian pyramid, with large steps; sometimes this pyramid makes one of the sides of an area, walled in with square stones and paved with flat stones: the pyramid is not solid, but the inside is filled with smaller fragments of coral stones."

rest have been destroyed, chiefly at the instigation of the missionaries.[1]

Some of the pyramids erected within these sacred enclosures were of great size. In Tahiti an enormous one was seen and described by Captain Cook as well as by later observers. It was of oblong shape and measured two hundred and sixty-seven feet in length by eighty-seven feet in width. It rose in a series of eleven steps or terraces, each four feet high, so that the total height of the structure was forty-four feet. Each step was formed of a single course of white coral stone, neatly squared and polished. The steps on the long sides were broader than those at the ends, so that at the top it terminated, not in an oblong of the same figure as the base, but in a ridge like the roof of a house. The interior of the pyramid was solid, being filled up with round pebbles which, from the regularity of their figure, seemed to have been wrought. Some of the coral stones were very large; one of them was three and a half feet long by two and a half feet wide. The foundation of the pyramid was built not of coral, but of what Captain Cook called rock, by which he probably meant a volcanic stone. These foundation stones were also squared; one of them measured four feet seven inches by two feet four inches. "Such a structure," says Captain Cook, "raised without the assistance of iron tools to shape the stones, or mortar to join them, struck us with astonishment: it seemed to be as compact and firm as it could have been made by any workman in Europe, except that the steps which range along its greatest length are not perfectly strait, but sink in a kind of hollow in the middle, so that the whole surface, from end to end, is not a right line, but a curve." All the stones, both rock and coral, must have been brought from a distance, for there was no quarry in the neighbourhood. The squaring of these blocks with stone tools must, as

[1] A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, p. 135. This writer has given us a survey and description of some of the principal remains which existed at the end of the nineteenth century (pp. 111-148). The ruins of two *maraes* in the island of Moorea are described by Mr. and Mrs. Routledge (*l.c.*). In one of them the pyramid stood at the western end of the enclosure, and in the other at the eastern end.

Captain Cook observes, have been a work of incredible labour; but the polishing of them could have been effected more easily by means of the sharp coral sand, which is found everywhere on the seashore in great abundance. On the top of the pyramid, and about the middle, stood the wooden image of a bird; and near it lay the image of a fish carved in stone. This great pyramid formed part of one side of a spacious area, nearly square, which measured three hundred and sixty feet by three hundred and fifty-four, and was walled in with stone as well as paved with flat stones in its whole extent. Notwithstanding the pavement, several trees were growing within the sacred enclosure. About a hundred yards to the west was another paved area or court, in which were several small stages raised on wooden pillars about seven feet high. These stages the natives called *ewattas*. Captain Cook judged them rightly to be altars, observing that they supported what appeared to be offerings in the shape of provisions of all sorts, as well as whole hogs and many skulls of hogs and dogs.[1]

The pyramids within the sacred enclosure were not usually so large or so lofty. In the island of Huahine the pyramid of the chief god Tani or Tane was a hundred and twenty-four feet long by sixteen feet broad, and it had only two steps or stories. The lower step or story was about ten feet high and faced with blocks of coral, set on their edges: some of these blocks were as high as the step itself. The upper step or story was similarly faced with coral, but was not more than three feet high. The interior of both stories was filled with earth. In the centre of the principal front stood the god's bed, a stone platform twenty-four feet long by thirteen feet wide, but only eighteen inches high. The style and masonry of this pyramid, as well as its dimensions, appear to have been very inferior to those of the great one in Tahiti. The blocks were apparently unhewn and unpolished, the angles ill formed, and the walls

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 157-159. The great pyramid was afterwards visited and described by the first missionaries. Their measurements confirm, while slightly exceeding, those of Captain Cook. They speak, however, of ten steps instead of eleven, and say that the lowest step was six feet high and the rest about five. See J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 207 *sq.*, with the plate.

not straight. Venerable and magnificent trees overshadowed the sanctuary. One of them measured fifteen yards in girth above the roots. It is said that the god often wished to fly away, but that his long tail always caught in the boughs of this giant tree and dragged him down to earth again.[1]

These sacred pyramids "were erected in any place, and at any time, when the priests required, by the slavish people. On such occasions the former overlooked the latter at their work, and denounced the most terrible judgments upon those who were remiss at it. The poor wretches were thus compelled to finish their tasks (burthensome as they often were, in heaving blocks from the sea, dragging them ashore, and heaping them one upon another) without eating, which would have desecrated the intended sanctuary. To restrain the gnawings of hunger they bound girdles of bark round their bodies, tightening the ligatures from time to time, as their stomachs shrank with emptiness. And, when the drudgery was done, it was not uncommon for the remorseless priests to seize one of the miserable builders and sacrifice him to the idol of the place."[2]

Temples of this sort were found scattered over the islands in every situation—on hill-tops, on jutting headlands, and in the recesses of groves.[3] They varied greatly in size: some were small and built in the rudest manner, mere squares of ill-shapen and ill-piled stones. In the island of Borabora the missionaries found not less than two hundred and twenty of these structures crowded within an area only ten miles in circumference.[4] The trees that grew within the sacred enclosure were sacred. They comprised particularly the tall cypress-like casuarina and the broader-leaved and more exuberant callophyllum, thespesia, and cardia. Their interlacing boughs formed a thick umbrageous covert, which often excluded the rays of the sun; and the contrast between the bright glare of a tropical day outside and the sombre gloom in the depths of the grove, combined with the sight of the gnarled trunks and twisted boughs of the aged trees,

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 265 *sq.*

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* ii. 13 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 341.

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* ii. 13.

and the sighing of the wind in the branches, to strike a religious horror into the mind of the beholder.[1] The ground which surrounded the temples (*morais*) was sacred and afforded a sanctuary for criminals. Thither they fled on any apprehension of danger, especially when many human sacrifices were expected, and thence they might not be torn by violence, though they were sometimes seduced from their asylum by guile.[2]

These remarkable sanctuaries were at once temples for the worship of the gods and burial-places for the human dead. On this combination of functions I have already adduced some evidence;[3] but as the point is important, I will cite further testimonies as to the custom of burying the dead in these enclosures.

Thus Captain Cook writes: "I must more explicitly observe that there are two places in which the dead are deposited: one a kind of shed, where the flesh is suffered to putrefy; the other an enclosure, with erections of stones, where the bones are afterwards buried. The sheds are called *tupapow*, and the enclosures *morai*. The *morais* are also places of worship."[4] Again, after describing how a dead body used to be placed in the temporary house or shed (*tupapow*) and left there to decay for five moons, Captain Cook tells us that "what remains of the body is taken down from the bier, and the bones, having been scraped and washed very clean, are buried, according to the rank of the person, either within or without a *morai*: if the deceased was an *earee* or chief, his skull is not buried with the rest of the bones, but is wrapped up in fine cloth, and put in a kind of box made for that purpose, which is also placed in the *morai*. This coffer is called *ewharre no te orometua*, the house of a teacher or master."[5]

Again, after describing the human sacrifice which he witnessed at the great *morai* at Attahooroo, in Tahiti, Captain Cook proceeds as follows: "The *morai* (which, undoubtedly, is a place of worship, sacrifice, and burial at the same time), where the sacrifice was now offered, is

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 341 *sq.*
[2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 351.
[3] Above, pp. 116 *sqq.*
[4] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 217.
[5] J. Cook, *op. cit.* i. 219.

that where the supreme chief of the whole island is always buried, and is appropriated to his family, and some of the principal people. It differs little from the common ones, except in extent. Its principal part is a large oblong pile of stones, lying loosely upon each other, about twelve or fourteen feet high, contracted toward the top, with a square area on each side, loosely paved with pebble stones, under which the bones of the chiefs are buried. . . . The human sacrifices are buried under different parts of the pavement." [1]

Again, Captain Cook tells us that after a battle the victors used to collect all the dead that had fallen into their hands and bring them to the *morai*, where, with much ceremony, they dug a hole and buried all the bodies in it as so many offerings to the gods; but the skulls of the slain were never afterwards taken up. Their own great chiefs who fell in battle were treated in a different manner. Captain Cook was informed that the bodies of the late king and two chiefs, who were slain in battle, were brought to the *morai* at Attahooroo. There the priests cut out the bowels of the corpses before the great altar, and the bodies were afterwards buried at three different spots in the great pile of stones which formed the most conspicuous feature of the *morai*. Common men who perished in the same battle were all buried in a single hole at the foot of the pile. The spots where the bodies of the king and chiefs reposed were pointed out to Captain Cook and his companions.[2]

Again, in the island of Tahiti, the naturalist George Forster, who accompanied Captain Cook, saw a stone building, "in form of the frustum of a pyramid," constructed in terraces or steps, and measuring about twenty yards in length at the base. "This the native said was a burying-place and place of worship, *marài*, and distinguished it by the name of *marai no-Aheatua*, the burying-place of Aheatua, the present king of Tiarroboo." [3]

Again, in the island of Huahine, the missionaries Tyerman and Bennet saw "a pagan *marae* hard by, where the sovereigns of Huahine were buried—and where, indeed, they lay in more than oriental state, each one resting in

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 37.
[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 40 *sq.*
[3] G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, i. 267.

his bed, at the foot of the Sacred Mountain, beneath the umbrage of the magnificent *aoa* [tree], and near the beach for ever washed by waters that roll round the world. . . . The great *marae* itself was dedicated to Tani, the father of the gods here; but the whole ground adjacent was marked with the vestiges of smaller *maraes*—private places for worship and family interment—while this was the capital of the island and the headquarters of royalty and idolatry."[1] A little later, speaking of the same sacred place, the missionaries observe, "The first *marae* that we visited was the sepulchral one of the kings of Huahine, for many generations. It was an oblong inclosure, forty-five feet long by twenty broad, fenced with a strong stone wall. Here the bodies of the deceased, according to the manner of the country, being bound up, with the arms doubled to their shoulders, the legs bent under their thighs and both forced upwards against the abdomen, were let down, without coffins, into a hole prepared for their reception, and just deep enough to allow the earth to cover their heads."[2]

One of our best authorities on these islands, William Ellis, speaks of the *maraes* (*morais*), whether they belonged to private families, to districts, or to the kings, as being "the general depositories of the bones of the departed, whose bodies had been embalmed"; and as a motive for the practice he alleges the sanctity which attached to these places, and which might naturally be supposed to guard the graves against impious and malicious violation.[3] However, the first missionaries say of the islanders that "they bury none in the *morai*, but those offered in sacrifice, or slain in battle, or the children of chiefs which have been strangled at the birth—an act of atrocious inhumanity too common."[4] According to Moerenhout, the *marais* (*morais*) belonging to private families were often used as cemeteries; but in the public *marais* none but the human victims, and sometimes the priests, were interred.[5] Thus there is to some extent a conflict of testimony between our authorities on the subject of burial in the temples. But the evidence which I have

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 271.

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 280.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 405. See above, pp. 117 *sq.*

[4] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 364.

[5] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 470.

adduced seems to render it probable that many at least of the *morais* served as burial-grounds for kings and chiefs of high degree, and even for common men who had fallen fighting in the service of their country.

In more recent years the German traveller, Arthur Baessler, who examined and described the existing ruins of these sacred edifices, denied that the *maraes* (*morais*) were places of burial, while he allowed that they were places of worship.[1] He distinguished a *marae* from an *ahu*, admitting at the same time that they closely resembled each other, both in their structure and in the ritual celebrated at them.[2] According to him, a *marae* was a sort of domestic chapel, the possession of which constituted the most distinctive mark of a noble family. Every chief, high or low, had one of them and took rank according to its antiquity.[3] It was an oblong area, open to the sky and enclosed by walls on three sides and by a pyramid on the fourth: walls and pyramid alike were built of blocks of stone or coral.[4] The *ahu*, on the other hand, was a monument erected to the memory of a distinguished chief, whose mortal remains were deposited in it. But apart from the grave which it contained, the *ahu*, according to Baessler, hardly differed from a *marae*, though it was mostly larger: it was a great walled enclosure with a pyramid, altars, and houses of the priests. And the ritual celebrated in the *ahu* resembled the ritual performed in the *marae*: there, too, the faithful assembled to pray, and there the priests recited the same liturgy.[5] Thus both the form and, to some extent at least, the function of the two types of sanctuary presented a close similarity. The islanders themselves, it appears, do not always clearly distinguish them at the present day.[6] And the single distinction on which Baessler insisted, that the dead were buried in the *ahu* but not in the *marae*, seems not to hold good universally, even on Baessler's own showing. For he admits that, "if ever a chief was buried in his own *marae*, it must have been in most exceptional cases, but probably statements to that effect rest only on a confusion of the *marae* with the *ahu*;

[1] A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 116 *sq.*, 127 *sq.*, 144 *sq.*
[2] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 130, 131.
[3] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 119.
[4] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 117 *sq.*
[5] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 130 *sq.*
[6] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 140.

such a practice would also run counter to the habits of the natives, who sought the most secret places for their dead, and certainly concealed the heads in caves difficult of access and unknown to others. On the other hand, the *maraes* of humbler families may more frequently, if not as a rule, have served as places of burial."[1] And even in regard to the holiest *marae*, dedicated to the great god Oro, in the island of Raiatea,[2] Baessler himself cites a tradition, apparently well authenticated, that a great number of warriors slain in battle were buried in it.[3] The argument that the people buried their dead, or at all events their skulls, only in remote caves among the mountains seems untenable; for according to the evidence of earlier writers the practice of concealing the bones or the skulls of the dead in caves was generally, if not always, a precaution adopted in time of war, to prevent these sacred relics from falling into the hands of invaders; the regular custom seems to have been to bury the bones in or near the *marae* and to keep the skulls either there or in the house.[4] On the whole, then, it is perhaps safer to follow earlier and, from the nature of the case, better-informed writers in neglecting the distinction which Baessler drew between a *marae* (*morai*) and an *ahu*. In any case we have Baessler's testimony that an *ahu* was at once a place of burial and a place of worship. There seems to be no evidence that any of these sacred edifices, whether *maraes* or *ahus*, were associated with a worship of the sun. On the other hand, it is certain that some at least of them were dedicated, partly or chiefly, to a cult of the dead, which formed a very important element in the religion of the Society Islanders, whereas there is little or nothing to show that they adored either the sun, or any other of the heavenly bodies, with the possible exception of the moon.[5] This did

[1] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 127.

[2] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 124, 141.

[3] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 127 *sq.*, 144 *sq.*

[4] See below, p. 311.

[5] Ellis says, "I am not aware that they rendered divine homage either to the sun or moon" (*Polynesian Researches*, iii. 171). Speaking of the Areois, Moerenhout says that "it seems to me clear that though they did not adore directly the sun and the other stars, nevertheless their worship was little else than sabeism or the adoration of the visible and animated universe" (*op. cit.* i. 503). He interpreted both Oro and Maui or Mahoui (as he spells the name) as the sun-god (*op. cit.* i. 484, 502, 503, 560 *sq.*); but these interpretations appear to

not, however, prevent them from entertaining absurd notions concerning these great luminaries. At an eclipse they imagined that the moon or the sun was being swallowed by some god whom they had offended; and on such occasions they repaired to the temple and offered prayers and liberal presents to the deity for the purpose of inducing him to disgorge the luminary.[1]

Temples such as have been described were erected on all important occasions, such as a war, a decisive victory, or the installation of a great chief or king of a whole island. In these latter cases the natives boasted that the number of persons present was so great that, if each of them only brought a single stone, the amount of stones thus collected would have sufficed to build their largest temples and pyramids.[2] One of the occasions when it became necessary to build new temples was when the old ones had been overthrown by enemies in war. After such a desecration it was customary to perform a ceremony for the purpose of purifying the land from the defilement which it had incurred through the devastations of the foe, who had, perhaps, demolished the temples, destroyed or mutilated the idols, and burned with fire the curiously carved pieces of wood which marked the sacred places of interment and represented the spirits of

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be his own guesses, unsupported by any statement of the natives. Maui was the great Polynesian hero, one of whose most famous exploits was catching the sun in a snare and compelling him to move more slowly (E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 234 *sqq.*, *s.v.* "Maui"; see above, p. 275); but this story, far from favouring the identification of Maui with the sun, seems fatal to it. According to J. R. Forster, the great god Taroa (Taaroa) was thought to have created the sun and to dwell in it (*Observations*, p. 540); but even if this statement is correct, it hardly implies a worship of the sun. With regard to the moon, the same writer tells us (*l.c.*) that it was supposed to be procreated by a goddess named O-Heena, "who presides in the black cloud which appears in this luminary"; and the statement is repeated by his son, George Forster, who adds: "The women sing a short couplet, which seems to be an act of adoration paid to that divinity [O-Heena], perhaps because they suppose her to have some influence upon their physical œconomy. . . . 'The cloud within the moon, that cloud I love'" (*Voyage round the World*, ii. 152). This so far seems to imply a reverence for the moon; and there are some grounds for thinking that O-Heena or Hina (as the name is usually spelt) was in Eastern Polynesia a moon-goddess. See above, p. 267, note 2.

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 331 *sq.*, iii. 171. According to another account, the sun and moon in eclipse were supposed to be in the act of copulation. See J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 346.

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 468.

the dead (*tiis*). Before the rite of purification was performed the temples were rebuilt, new altars reared, new images placed within the sacred precincts, and new wooden effigies set up near the graves. At the close of the rites in the new temples, the worshippers repaired to the seashore, where the chief priest offered a short prayer and the people dragged a net of coco-nut leaves through a shallow part of the sea, usually detaching small pieces of coral, which they brought ashore. These were called fish and were delivered to the priest, who conveyed them to the temple and deposited them on the altar, offering at the same time a prayer to induce the gods to cleanse the land from pollution, that it might be as pure as the coral fresh from the sea. It was now thought safe to abide on the soil and to eat of its produce, whereas if the ceremony had not been performed, death would have been, in the opinion of the people, the consequence of partaking of fruits grown on the defiled land.[1]

The temples were sacred. When a man approached one of them to worship or to bring his offering to the altar, he bared his body to the waist in sign of reverence and humility.[2] Women in general might not enter a temple, but when their presence was indispensable for certain ceremonies, the ground was covered with cloth, on which they walked, lest they should defile the holy place with their feet.[3] For example, some six weeks or two months after the birth of a child the father and mother took the child to a temple, where they both offered their blood to the gods by cutting their heads with shark's teeth and allowing the blood to drip on leaves, which they laid on the altar. On this occasion the husband spread a cloth on the floor of the temple for his wife to tread upon, for she might not step on the ground or the pavement.[4] Similarly at marriage bride and bridegroom visited the family temple (*marae*, *morai*), where the skulls of their ancestors were brought out and placed before them; but a large white

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 348 *sq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 224; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, p. 547; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 469. Elsewhere (vi. 149) Captain Cook mentions that the baring of the body on the approach to a temple was especially incumbent on women, who otherwise had to make a considerable circuit to avoid the sacred edifice.

[3] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 469 *sq.*; A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 126 *sq.*

[4] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 536 *sq.*

cloth had to be spread out on the pavement for the bride to walk upon. Sometimes at these marriage rites the female relatives cut their faces and brows with shark's teeth, caught the flowing blood on cloth, and deposited the cloth, sprinkled with the mingled blood of the mothers of the married pair, at the feet of the bride.[1] At other times the mother of the bride gashed her own person cruelly with a shark's tooth, and having filled a coco-nut basin with the blood which flowed from her wounds, she presented it to the bridegroom, who immediately threw it from him.[2] While certain festivals were being celebrated at the temples the exclusion of women from them was still more rigid. Thus in the island of Huahine, during the celebration of the great annual festival, at which all the idols of the island were brought from their various shrines to the principal temple to be clothed with new dresses and ornaments, no woman was allowed to approach any of the sacred edifices under pain of death, which was instantly inflicted by whoever witnessed the sacrilege. Even if the wives and children of the priests themselves came within a certain distance, while some particular services were going on, they were murdered on the spot by their husbands and fathers with the utmost ferocity.[3]

Some of these sacred edifices are still impressive in their ruins and deserve the name of megalithic monuments. Thus the temple (*marae*, *morai*) of Oro at Opoa, which was the holiest temple in the island of Raiatea and perhaps in the Society Islands generally,[4] is about a hundred and thirty-eight feet long by twenty-six feet broad. It is enclosed by a wall of gigantic coral blocks standing side by side to a height of about six feet seven inches. The blocks have been hewn from the inner reef; the outer surfaces were smoothed, the inner left rough. One of the blocks stands over eleven feet high, without reckoning the part concealed by the soil; it is twelve feet wide, by two and a half feet thick. Another block is about ten feet long by eight feet broad and one foot thick.[5] In the ruined temple of Tainuu, situated in the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 271 *sq.*

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 558.

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 267 *sq.*

[4] A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 124, 141; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 529 *sq.*

[5] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 142.

district of Tevaitoa, one block is about eleven and a half feet high by eleven feet wide, with a thickness varying from twenty inches to two and a half feet.[1]

The idols or images of the gods were usually made of wood, but sometimes of stone. Some were rudely carved in human shape; others were rough unpolished logs, wrapped in many folds of cloth or covered with a matting of coco-nut fibre.[2] The image of the god Oro was a straight log of casuarina wood, six feet long, uncarved, but decorated with feathers. On the other hand Taaroa, the supreme deity of Polynesia, was represented by a rudely carved human figure about four feet high, with a number of little images studding his body to indicate the multitude of gods that had proceeded from him as creator. The body of the god was hollow, and when it was taken from the temple, where it had been worshipped for many generations, it was found to contain a number of small idols in the cavity. It is supposed that these petty gods had been placed there by their worshippers and owners that they might absorb some of the supernatural powers of the greater divinity before being removed to the places where they were to commence deities on their own account.[3] With a similar intention it was customary to fill the inside of the hollow images with red feathers in order that the plumes might be impregnated with the divine influence and might afterwards diffuse it for the benefit of the owner of the feathers, who had placed them in the image for that purpose. The red feathers, plucked from a small bird which is found in many of the islands, thus became an ordinary medium for communicating and extending supernatural powers, not only in the Society Islands, but throughout Polynesia. The beautiful long tail-feathers of the tropic or man-of-war bird were used for the same purpose. The gods were supposed to be very fond of these feathers and ready to impart their blessed essence to them. Hence people

[1] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 146.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 337 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 471. According to Ellis, the wooden images were made from the durable timber of the *aito* or casuarina tree, and the stone images were mostly rude uncarved angular columns of basalt, of various sizes, though some were of calcareous or siliceous stone. Some stone images, however, were rudely carved in human form. See A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, pp. 128 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 354.

brought the feathers to the priest and received from him in exchange two or three which had been sanctified in the stomach of the deity; on extracting them from that receptacle, the priest prayed to the god that he would continue to inhabit the red feathers even when they were detached from his divine person.[1] The feathers thus consecrated were themselves regarded as in some sense divine and were called gods (*atuas*, *oromatuas*); the people had great confidence in their sovereign virtue, and on occasions of danger they sought them out, believing that the mere presence of the feathers would afford them adequate protection. For example, when they were threatened by a storm at sea, they would hold out the feathers to the menacing clouds and command them to depart.[2]

§ 5. *The Sacrifices, Priests, and Sacred Recorders*

The offerings presented to the gods included every kind of valuable property, such as birds, fish, beasts, the fruits of the earth and the choicest native manufactures. The fruits and other eatables were generally, but not always, dressed. Portions of the fowls, pigs, or fish, cooked with sacred fire in the temple, were presented to the deity; the remainder furnished a banquet for the priests and other sacred persons, who were privileged to eat of the sacrifices. The portions appropriated to the gods were placed on the altar and left there till they decayed. In the public temples the great altars were wooden stages, some eight or ten feet high, supported on a number of wooden posts, which were sometimes curiously carved and polished. But there were also smaller altars in the temples; some of them were like round tables, resting on a single post. Domestic altars and such as were erected near the bodies of dead friends were small square structures of wicker-work. In sacrificing pigs they were very anxious not to break a bone or disfigure the animal. Hence they used to strangle the animal or bleed it to death.[3]

Human victims were sacrificed on many occasions, as in time of war, at great national festivals, during the illness of

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 338 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 471 *sqq.*

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 473 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 344 *sq.*

their rulers, and at the building of a temple. William Ellis was told that the foundations of some of their sacred edifices were laid in human sacrifices, and that at least the central pillar, which supported the roof of one of the sacred houses at Maeva, had been planted on the body of a man. The victims were either captives taken in war or persons who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the chiefs or the priests. In the technical language of the priests they were called "fish." When once a man had been chosen for sacrifice, the family to which he belonged was regarded as taboo or devoted to the altar, and when another victim was wanted, he was more frequently taken from that family than from any other. Similarly, a district which had once furnished victims was thenceforth devoted. Hence, at the approach of ceremonies which were usually accompanied by human sacrifices, the members of certain families and the inhabitants of certain districts used to flee to the mountains and hide in caves till the ceremony was over. But the doomed man was seldom apprised of his fate beforehand. A sudden blow with a club or a stone on the nape of the neck was the usual way of despatching him, lest the body should be mangled or a bone broken. If the blow had only stunned him, he was soon killed, and the corpse, placed in a long basket of coco-nut leaves, was carried to the temple and offered to the god by being set before the idol. In dedicating it the priest took out one of the eyes and handed it on a leaf to the king, who made as if he would swallow it, but passed it on to a priest or attendant. After the ceremony the body, still wrapt in coco-nut leaves, was often deposited on the branches of a neighbouring tree, where it remained some time. Finally, the bones were taken down and buried under the pavement of the temple (*marae*).[1]

In the family, according to patriarchal usage, the father was the priest, but the priests of the national temples formed a distinct class; their office was hereditary. The high priesthood was often held by a member of the royal family, and sometimes the king himself acted as the national priest.

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 345-348. Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 168 *sqq.*, vi. 28-41; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 350 *sq.*; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 549, ii. 38 *sq.*

The duties of the priests were to recite prayers, to present offerings, and to sacrifice victims. Their prayers, usually uttered in shrill, chanting tones, were often exceedingly long and full of repetitions.[1] They had plenty of employment, being called in to officiate on all occasions, whether at birth or at death, at feasts or in sickness; for they were the physicians as well as the clergy of the country. They professed to possess extraordinary powers, such as to promote conception or to effect abortion, to cause or to heal disease, to pray the evil spirit into food, and even to kill men outright. Hence they were greatly feared.[2] Of the little knowledge that existed in the islands the priests are reported to have possessed the largest share, but it consisted chiefly in an acquaintance with the names and ranks of the various subordinate deities (*atuas*); however, according to Captain Cook, they excelled the rest of the people in their knowledge of navigation and astronomy: indeed, the very name for priest (*tahowa*) signified nothing more than a man of knowledge.[3] In the island of Huahine the priest whose duty it was to carry the image of the god Tani (Tane) "was a personage of such superhuman sanctity that everything which he touched became sacred; he was, therefore, not suffered to marry, as the honour of being his wife was too much for any mortal woman. But this was not all; he would himself be so defiled by such a connection that he would be disqualified for his office, and must immediately resign it; nay, if he did not repent, and return with a great peace-offering to Tani's house, he might expect to be first struck blind, and afterwards strangled in his sleep. He was not allowed to climb a cocoa tree, because, if he did, it would be so hallowed that nobody else durst afterwards ascend it."[4]

One of the most important functions of the priests was to act as mouthpieces of the gods. In the discharge of this duty they were believed to be inspired and possessed by the deity, who spoke through them to the people. When the time came for them to consult the god, they assumed an odd

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 342 *sq.* Compare J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 545 *sqq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 474 *sqq.*

[2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 348.

[3] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 223.

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 279.

fantastic dress, enriched with red and black feathers, to which the deity was so partial, that when the priests approached him in this array, he descended to earth at their call in one of the sacred birds that frequented the temples (*morais*) and fed on the sacrifices. As soon as the bird lighted on the sacred edifice, the god left the fowl and entered into the priest. The holy man, thus inspired, now stretched himself, yawned, and rubbed his arms, legs, and body, which began to be inflated, as if the skin of the abdomen would burst; the eyes of the seer were thrown into various contortions, now staring wide, now half-shut and sinking into stupor, while at other times the whole frame was convulsed and appeared to have undergone a sudden and surprising change. The voice sank to a low pitch, and grew squeaky and broken; but at times it would suddenly rise to an astonishing height. The words uttered by the possessed man were regarded as oracular, and nothing that he asked for the god or for himself in this state was ever refused him. Of all this the priest himself affected to be entirely unaware, but a colleague was regularly at hand to record the divine message and the divine requirements, which were often very large. When the deity took his departure from the priest, he did so with such convulsions and violence as to leave the man lying motionless and exhausted on the ground, and the oracle was so timed that this happened at the very moment when the sacred bird, the vehicle of the god, flew away from the temple. On coming to himself the priest uttered a loud shriek and seemed to wake as from a profound sleep, unconscious of everything that had passed.[1] Sometimes, however, the priest continued to be possessed by the deity for two or three days; at such times he wore a piece of native cloth, of a peculiar sort, round one arm as a sign of his inspiration. His acts during this period were deemed to be those of the god; hence the greatest attention was paid to his expressions and to the whole of his deportment. Indeed, so long as the fit of inspiration lasted he was called a god (*atua*); but when it was over, he resumed his ordinary title of priest.[2]

We are told that in his fine frenzy the priest "often rolled on the earth, foaming at the mouth, as if labouring under

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 349 *sq.* [2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 373-375.

the influence of the divinity, by whom he was possessed, and, in shrill cries, and violent and often indistinct sounds, revealed the will of the god."[1] It would probably be a mistake to assume that on such occasions the frantic behaviour was deliberately assumed and the wild whirling words were consciously uttered for the purpose of deceiving the people; in short, that the whole performance was a mere piece of acting, a bare-faced imposture. It is far more likely that, bred from childhood to believe in the reality of divine inspiration, the priest often sincerely imagined himself to be possessed by a deity, and that, under the excitement which such an imagination was calculated to produce, he honestly mistook his own thick-coming fancies for a revelation from the gods. A chief, who had formerly been a prophet of the god Oro, assured the missionaries "that although he sometimes feigned his fits of inspiration, to deceive the credulous multitude, yet, at other times, they came upon him involuntarily and irresistibly. Something seemed to rush through his whole frame, and overpower his spirit, in a manner which he could not describe. Then he frothed at the mouth, gnashed his teeth, and distorted his limbs with such violence that it required five or six strong men to hold him. At these times his words were deemed oracles, and whatever he advised respecting state affairs, or other matters, was implicitly observed by king and chiefs."[2] Thus on the ravings of these crazy fanatics or deliberate impostors often hung the issues of life or death, of war or peace.[3] It appears to have been especially the priests of Oro who laid claim to inspiration and contrived to shape the destinies of their country through the powerful sway which they exercised over the mind of the king. In their fits of fanatical frenzy, while they delivered their oracles, they insisted on the sovereign's implicit compliance with their mandates, denouncing the most dreadful judgments on him if he should prove refractory.[4]

Apart from the priests there was a class of men whose business it was to preserve and hand down to their successors the lists of the gods, the liturgical prayers, and the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 373 *sq.*

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 124.

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 114 *sq.*

[4] D Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 121.

sacred traditions. As these liturgies and legends were often very lengthy and couched in a metaphorical and obscure language, a prodigious memory and long practice were indispensable for their preservation and transmission among a people to whom the art of writing was unknown. Since the slightest mistake in the recitation of a liturgy was deemed the worst of omens and necessitated the suspension of the religious service, however costly and important the service might be, the sacred recorders, as we may call them, were obliged, for the sake of their credit, to practise continually the recitation of the prayers, legends, and traditions of which they were the depositories. To aid them in their task they made use of bundles of little sticks of different sizes, one of which they drew from a bundle at the conclusion of each prayer. It was their duty on solemn occasions to recite these liturgies or sacred poems while they paced slowly by night round the temples (*morais*) and other holy places; hence they went by the name of *harepo*, which means "Walkers by night." We are told that if at these times they made a mistake in a single word or hesitated for a moment, they stopped and returned home; and if the subject of their prayers chanced to be some enterprise in which they desired to enlist the favour of the gods, such a mistake or hesitation was enough to cause the undertaking to be abandoned irretrievably, since success in it was believed to be impossible. Nothing, it is said, could be more astonishing than the memory displayed by these men, while they recited, word for word, and for nights together, the ancient traditions of which the mutilated and mangled remains would demand the assiduous study of several years. The office of sacred recorder (*harepo*) was hereditary in the male line; the sons were trained in the duties from their earliest years, but only such as were endowed with an excellent memory could satisfy the requirements of the profession. They believed that a good memory was a gift of the gods.[1]

[1] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 504-507.

§ 6. *The Doctrine of the Human Soul*

Of the Society Islanders we are informed that "they believe every man to have a separate being within him, named *tee*, which acts in consequence of the impression of the senses, and combines ideas into thoughts. This being, which we would call the soul, exists after death, and lodges in the wooden images which are placed round the burying-places, and which are called by the same name, *tee*."[1] When they were asked in what part of the body the soul resides, they always answered that it was seated in the belly or in the bowels (*I roto té obou*). They would not admit that the brain could be the seat of thought or the heart of the affections; and in support of their opinion they alleged the agitation of the bowels in strong emotion, such as fear and desire.[2] Hence, too, they called thoughts by a phrase which signifies "words in the belly" (*parou no te oboo*).[3]

But the Society Islanders did not regard the possession of a soul as a privilege peculiar to humanity. According to Captain Cook, "they maintain that not only all other animals, but trees, fruit, and even stones, have souls, which at death, or upon being consumed or broken, ascend to the divinity, with whom they first mix, and afterwards pass into the mansion allotted to each."[4] Their word for soul was *varoua*, according to Moerenhout, who adds that, "It appears that they accorded this *varoua* (spirit, soul) not only to man, but even in addition to the animals, to plants, to everything that vegetates, grows or moves on the earth."[5]

They thought that the soul of man could be separated for a time from the body during life without causing immediate death. Thus, like many other peoples, they explained dreams by the supposed absence of the soul during slumber. We are told that "they put great confidence in dreams, and suppose in sleep the soul leaves the body under the care of the guardian angel, and moves

[1] G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 151 *sq.* Compare J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 534 *sq.*, 542 *sq.*, where the word for soul is given as *E-teehee* or *Teehee*.

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 431.

[3] G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 151 note *.

[4] J. Cook, *op. cit.* vi. 151.

[5] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 430.

at large through the regions of spirits. Thus they say, My soul was such a night in such a place, and saw such a spirit. When a person dies, they say his soul is fled away, *hārre pō*, gone to night."[1] But they also believed that a man's soul or spirit could be conjured out of his body by magic art or demoniacal agency. Thus, when people had been robbed, they would sometimes call in the help of a priest to ascertain the thief. In such a case the priest, after offering prayers to his demon, would direct them to dig a hole in the floor of the house and to fill it with water; then, taking a young plantain in his hand, he would stand over the hole and pray to the god, whom he invoked, and who, if he were propitious, was supposed to conduct the spirit of the thief to the house and to place it over the water. The image of the spirit, which they believed to resemble the person of the man, was, according to their account, reflected in the water and perceived by the priest, who was thus able to identify the thief, alleging that the god had shown him the reflection of the culprit in the water.[2] From this it appears that in the opinion of the Society Islanders, as of many other peoples, a man's soul or spirit is a faithful image of his body.[3]

They believed that in the pangs of death the soul keeps fluttering about the lips, and that, when all is over, it ascends and mixes with or, as they expressed it, is eaten by the deity.[4] When one of their sacred recorders (*harepo*), who had been famous in his life for his knowledge of the ancient traditions, was at the point of death, it was customary for his son and successor to place his mouth over the mouth of the dying man, as if to inhale the parting soul at the moment of quitting the body; for in this way he was supposed to inherit the lore of his father. The natives, it is said, were

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 346. In the Polynesian languages *po* is the word both for "night" and for "the shades," the primaeval darkness from which all forms of life were evolved, and to which the souls of the dead return. See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 342, *s.v.* "po."

[2] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 378 *sq.*

[3] Compare W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 396, "What their precise ideas of a spirit were, it is not easy to ascertain. They appear, however, to have imagined the shape or form resembled that of the human body, in which they sometimes appeared in dreams to the survivors."

[4] J. Cook, *op. cit.* vi. 150.

convinced that these sages owed their learning to this expedient, though none the less they studied day and night to perfect themselves in their profession.[1]

§ 7. *Disease, Death, and Mourning*

Every disease was supposed to be the result of direct supernatural agency, and to be inflicted by the gods for some crime committed against the law of taboo of which the sufferer had been guilty; or it might have been brought upon him by an enemy, who had compassed his destruction by means of an offering. They explained death in like manner: according to them, it was invariably caused by the direct influence of the gods.[2] They acknowledged, indeed, that they possessed poisons which, taken with food, produced convulsions and death, but these effects they traced to the anger of the gods, who employed the drugs as their material agents or secondary causes. Even when a man was killed in battle, they still saw in his death the hand of a god, who had actually entered into the weapon that inflicted the fatal blow.[3]

The gods who were thus supposed to afflict human life with sickness and disease and to bring it to an untimely termination in death were not always nor perhaps usually the high primaeval deities; often they were the souls of the dead, who ranked among the domestic divinities (*oromatuas*). And, like the Maoris,[4] the natives of the Society Islands are said to have stood in particular fear of the souls of dead infants, who, angered at their mother for their too early death, took their revenge by sending sickness on the surviving members of the family. Hence when a woman was ill-treated by her husband, she would often threaten to insult the ghost of a dead baby; and this threat, with the deplorable consequences which it was calculated to entail, seldom failed to bring the husband to a better frame of mind; or if he happened to prove recalcitrant, the other members of the family, who might be involved in the calamity, would intercede and restore

[1] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 507.
[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 395; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 433, 538 *sqq.*
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 395 *sq.*
[4] See above, p. 49.

peace in the household. Thus we are told that among these islanders the fear of the dead supplied in some measure the place of natural affection and tenderness in softening and humanising the general manners.[1]

Disease and death were also attributed to the malignant charms of sorcerers, who, hired by an enemy of the sufferer, procured for the purpose the clipped hair or the spittle of their intended victim, the flowers or garment he had worn, or any object which had touched his person. But the real agents who were thought to give effect to the charms were the minor deities, whom the sorcerer employed to accomplish his nefarious ends. For this purpose he put the hair or other personal refuse of the victim in a bag along with the images and symbols of the petty divinities, and buried the bag and its contents in a hole which he had dug in the ground. There he left it until, applying his ear to the hole, he could hear the soul of the sufferer whimpering down below, which proved that the charm was taking effect. If the intended victim got wind of these machinations, it was always in his power to render them abortive, either by sacrificing to the gods or by sending a present to the sorcerer, who thus was feed by both sides at the same time.[2]

However, most cases of sickness apparently were set down not to the wiles of sorcerers, but to the displeasure of the deified spirits of the dead.[3] On this point the evidence of the early missionaries is explicit. Speaking of the Society Islanders, they say that "they regard the spirits of their ancestors, male and female, as exalted into *eatooas* [*atuas*, deities], and their favour to be secured by prayers and offerings. Every sickness and untoward accident they esteem as the hand of judgment for some offence committed; and therefore, if they have injured any person, they send their peace-offering, and make the matter up: and if sick, send for the priest to offer up prayers and sacrifices to pacify the offended *eatooa*; giving anything the priests ask, as being very reluctant to die."[4] "As it is their fixed opinion, that no disease affects them but as a punish-

[1] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 538 *sq.*

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 539-541. Compare W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 363 *sqq.*

[3] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 543.

[4] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 345.

ment inflicted by their *eatooa* [*atua*] for some offence, and never brought on themselves by intemperance or imprudence, they trust more to the prayers of their priests than to any medicine."[1]

They imagined that at death the soul (*varua*) was drawn out of the head by a god or spirit (*atua*) as a sword is drawn out of its scabbard, and that the spirits of the dead often waited to catch it at the moment when it issued from the body. Sometimes the dying man would fancy that he saw the spirits lurking for him at the foot of the bed, and would cry out in terror, "They are waiting for my spirit. Guard it! Preserve it from them!"[2]

When the last struggle was over, a priest or diviner (*tahua tutera*) was called in to ascertain the cause of death. For this purpose he entered his canoe and paddled slowly along on the sea, near the house in which the dead body was lying, in order to watch the passage of the departing spirit; for they thought that it would fly towards him with the emblem of the cause through which the person had died. If he had been cursed by the gods, the spirit would appear with a flame, fire being the agent employed in the incantations of the sorcerers, who had presumably drawn down the curse upon the deceased. If some enemy had bribed the gods to kill him, the spirit would come with a red feather, as a sign that evil spirits had entered into his food. After a short time the diviner returned to the house, announced the cause of death to the survivors, and received his fee, the amount of which was regulated by the circumstances of the family. After that a priest was employed to perform ceremonies and recite prayers for the purpose of averting destruction from the surviving members of the family; but the nature of the ceremonies has not been recorded.[3]

When it was manifest that death was approaching, the relatives and friends, who had gathered round the sufferer, broke into loud lamentations and other demonstrations of sorrow, which redoubled in violence as soon as the spirit had departed. Then they not only wailed in the loudest and most affecting tone, but tore out their hair, rent their

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 404. [2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 396.
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 398 *sq.*

garments, and cut themselves with shark's teeth or knives in a shocking manner. The instrument usually employed was a small cane, about four inches long, with five or six teeth fixed into it on opposite sides. Struck forcibly into the head, these instruments wounded it like a lancet, so that the blood poured down in copious streams. Every woman at marriage provided herself with one of these implements and used it unsparingly on herself on the occasion of a death in the family. Some people, not content with this instrument of torture, provided themselves with a sort of mallet armed with two or three rows of shark's teeth; and with this formidable weapon, on the demise of a relative or friend, they hammered themselves unmercifully, striking their skulls, temples, cheeks, and breast, till the blood flowed profusely from the wounds. At the same time they uttered the most deafening and agonising cries; and what with their frantic gestures, the distortion of their countenances, their torn and dishevelled hair, and the mingled tears and blood that trickled down their bodies, they presented altogether a horrible spectacle. This self-inflicted cruelty was practised chiefly by women, but not by them alone; for the men on these occasions committed the like enormities, and not only cut themselves, but came armed with clubs and other deadly weapons, which they sometimes plied freely on the bodies of other people. These dismal scenes began with the nearest relatives of the deceased, but they were not confined to them. No sooner did the tidings spread, and the sound of wailing was heard throughout the neighbourhood, than friends and kinsfolk flocked to the spot and joined in the demonstrations of real or affected sorrow. The pageant of woe reached its climax when the deceased was a king or a principal chief. It was then, above all, that the tenants and retainers came armed with bludgeons and stones, with which they fought each other till some of them were wounded or slain; while others operated on themselves by tearing their hair and lacerating their bodies in the usual manner till their bodies were bedabbled with blood. After the introduction of firearms into the islands, these lethal weapons lent variety and noise to the combats, as well as adding to the number of the slain. At the death of a

person of distinction these exhibitions of frenzied sorrow sometimes lasted two or three days in succession, or even longer.[1] On such occasions a body of armed men, composed of friends and allies, used to arrive from a neighbouring district and request to be allowed access to the body of the chief, in order that they might mourn for him in due form. The request was always refused by the bodyguards, who kept the last vigil over their departed lord; and in consequence a fight ensued in which several warriors were generally wounded or killed. Yet it was only a sham fight, which seems to have always ended in a victory for the mourners who had come from a distance; and when it was over, victors and vanquished regularly united in performing the usual sanguinary rites of mourning. In all the islands wrestling matches, combats, and assaults-at-arms were ordinary features of the obsequies of chiefs.[2]

The blood which women in the paroxysms of grief drew from their bodies, and the tears which flowed from their eyes, were received on pieces of cloth, which were then thrown upon or under the bier as oblations to the dead.[3] Sometimes for this purpose a woman would wear a short apron, which she held up with one hand, while she cut herself with the other, till the apron was soaked in blood. Afterwards she would dry it in the sun and present it to the bereaved family, who kept it as a token of the estimation in which the departed had been held.[4] Some of the younger mourners used also to cut off their hair and throw it under the bier with the other offerings.[5] When the deceased was a child, the parents, in addition to other tokens of grief, used to cut their hair short on one part of their heads, leaving the rest long; sometimes they shaved a square patch on the forehead; sometimes they left the hair on the forehead and cut off all the rest; at other times they removed all the hair but a lock over one or both ears; or again they would clip close one half of the head, while on the

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 407-409; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 352; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 546 *sq.*

[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 551 *sq.*

[3] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 135, 218; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, p. 560.

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 410.

[5] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 218; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, p. 560.

other half the tresses were suffered to grow long; and these signs of mourning might be continued for two or three years.[1]

Captain Cook tells us that the custom observed by mourners of offering their own blood, tears, and hair to their departed relative or friend "is founded upon a notion that the soul of the deceased, which they believe to exist in a separate state, is hovering about the place where the body is deposited: that it observes the actions of the survivors, and is gratified by such testimonies of their affection and grief."[2] This explanation, in perfect harmony with the vigilance, vanity, and jealousy commonly ascribed to ghosts, is in all probability correct. Yet it deserves to be noticed that the custom of voluntarily hacking the body with shark's teeth to the effusion of blood was singularly enough practised by the Society Islanders on occasions of joy as well as of sorrow. When a husband or a son returned to his family after a season of absence or exposure to danger, his arrival was greeted, not only with the cordial welcome and the warm embrace, but with loud wailing, while the happy wife or mother cut her body with shark's teeth, and the gladder she was the more she gashed herself.[3] Similarly many savage peoples weep over long-absent friends, or even over strangers, as a polite form of greeting in which genuine sorrow can hardly be supposed to play a part.[4] It is difficult to see how such observances can be based on superstition; apparently the emotion of joy may express itself in very different ways in different races.

The natives stood in great fear of the spirits of the dead, which were supposed to haunt the places of their former abode and to visit the habitations of men, but seldom on errands of mercy or benevolence. They woke the survivors from their slumbers by squeaking noises to upbraid them with their past wickedness or to reproach them with the neglect of some ceremony, for which the ghosts were compelled to suffer. Thus the people imagined that they lived in a world of spirits, which surrounded them night and day,

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 352 *sq.*
[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 218 *sq.*
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 410; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 196, 362.
[4] See *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, ii. 82 *sqq.*

watching every action of their lives and ready to revenge the smallest slight or the least disobedience to their injunctions, as these were proclaimed to the living by the priests. Convulsions and hysterics, for example, were ascribed to the action of spirits, which seized the sufferer, scratched his face, tore his hair, or otherwise maltreated him.[1]

This fear of the spirits of the dead induced the Society Islanders to resort to some peculiar ceremonies for the protection of the living against the ghosts of persons who had recently died. One of these quaint rites was performed by a priest, who went by the name of the "corpse-praying priest" (*tahua bure tiapa-pau*). When the corpse had been placed on a platform or bier in a temporary house, this priest ordered a hole to be dug in the earth or floor, near the foot of the platform, and over this hole he prayed to the god by whom the spirit of the deceased had been summoned to its long home. The purport of the prayer was that all the dead man's sins, and especially that for which his soul had been called to the region of Night (*po*), should be deposited in that hole, that they should not attach in any degree to the survivors, and that the anger of the god might be appeased. The priest next addressed the corpse, usually saying, "With you let the guilt now remain." The pillar or post of the corpse, as it was called, was then planted in the hole, earth was thrown over the guilt of the departed, and the hole filled up. After that, the priest proceeded to the side of the corpse, and taking some small slips of plantain leaf-stalk he fixed two or three of them under each arm, placed a few on the breast, and then, addressing the dead body, said, "There are your family, there is your child, there is your wife, there is your father, and there is your mother. Be satisfied yonder (that is, in the world of spirits). Look not towards those who are left in this world." The concluding parts of the ceremony were designed to impart contentment to the deceased, and to prevent his spirit from repairing to the places of his former resort, and so distressing the survivors. This was considered a most important ceremony, being a kind of mass for the dead and necessary as well for the peace of the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 406.

living as for the quiet of the departed. It was seldom omitted by any who could pay the priest his usual fees, which for this service generally took the form of pigs and cloth, in proportion to the rank or possessions of the family.[1]

Soon after the decease of a chief or person of distinction, another singular ceremony, called a *heva*, was performed by the relatives or dependants, who personated the ghost of the departed. The principal actor in the procession was a priest or kinsman who wore a curious dress and an imposing head-ornament called a *parae*. A cap or turban of thick native cloth was fitted close to the head; in front were two broad mother-of-pearl shells that covered the face like a mask, with only a small aperture through which the wearer could look in order to find his way. Above the mask were fixed a number of long, white, red-tipped feathers of the tropic bird, diverging like rays and forming a radiant circle; while beneath the mask was a thin yet strong board curved like a crescent, from which hung a sort of network of small pieces of brilliant mother-of-pearl, finely polished and strung together on threads. The depth of this network varied according to the taste or means of the family, but it was generally nine inches or a foot, and might consist of ten to fifteen or twenty perfectly straight and parallel rows. The labour of making this mother-of-pearl pendant must have been immense; for many hundred pieces of the shell had to be cut, ground down to the requisite thinness, polished and perforated, without the use of iron tools, before a single line could be fixed upon the head-dress. Fringed with feathers, the pendant formed a kind of ornamental breastplate or stomacher. Attached to it was a garment composed of alternate stripes of black and yellow cloth, which enveloped the body and reached sometimes to the loins, to the knees, or even to the ankles.[2] On his back the masker wore an ample cloak or mantle of network covered with glossy pigeon's feathers of a bluish colour. The costume appears to have been intended as a disguise to prevent the spectators from recognising the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 401-403. Compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 552.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 412 *sq.* Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 135 *sq.*, 138, 219; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 547-549.

wearer; for George Forster, who has given us an elaborate description of it, observes that "an ample hood of alternate parallel stripes of brown, yellow, and white cloth descends from the turban to cover the neck and shoulders, in order that as little as possible of the human figure may appear." [1]

In this strange garb the chief mummer, who was usually the nearest relation of the deceased, carried in one hand a formidable weapon, consisting of a staff about five feet long, one end of which was rounded to serve as a handle, while the other end broadened out into a sort of scythe, of which the inner or concave side was armed with a row of large strong shark's teeth fixed in the wood. In the other hand he bore a kind of clapper formed of two pearl-oyster shells, beautifully polished. Thus attired and equipped, he led a procession either from the house of the deceased, or, according to another account, from a valley to which, as if under a paroxysm of grief, the party had retired at the death of the person for whom the ceremony was performed; and as he walked along he continued to rattle or jingle the shells against each other to give notice of his approach. With him walked a number of men and boys, naked except for a girdle, armed with cudgels, their faces and bodies painted black, red, and white with charcoal and coloured earths. In this impressive style the mummers marched through the district, the people everywhere fleeing in terror at the sight of them, and even deserting the houses at their approach. For whenever the leader caught sight of any one, he ran at him, and if he overtook the fugitive, belaboured him with his sharp-toothed club, to the grievous mauling of the unfortunate wretch; while, not to be behind their leader, the assistants plied their bludgeons on the bodies of all and sundry who chanced to fall into their hands. At such times safety was only to be found in the king's temple, which served on this as on other occasions as a sort of sanctuary or place of refuge. Having thus scoured the country, the mummers marched several times round the platform where the body was exposed, after which they bathed in a river and resumed their customary apparel.

[1] G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 74. For the full description of the garb, see *id.*, ii. 71-75; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 450-453.

This performance was repeated at intervals for five moons, but less and less frequently as the end of the time approached. The longer it lasted, the greater was the honour supposed to be done to the dead. The relatives took it in turn to assume the fantastic dress and discharge the office of leader. Throughout the ceremonies the performers appeared and acted as if they were deranged. They were supposed to be inspired by, or at all events to represent, the spirit of the deceased, to revenge any injury he might have received, or to punish those who had not shown due respect to his remains.[1] Hence we may infer that the whole of this quaint masquerade was designed to appease the anger of the ghost, and so to protect the survivors by preventing him from returning to take vengeance on them for any wrongs or slights he might have suffered at their hands.

The same fear of the returning ghost is clearly expressed in a prayer which the natives used to address to a dead relative at burial. They put blossoms of bread-fruit and leaves of the edible fern under the arms of the corpse, and as they did so, they prayed, saying, "You go to the Po [Night, the World of Shades], plant bread-fruit there, and be food for the gods; but do not come and strangle us, and we will feed your swine and cultivate your lands."[2]

§ 8. *The Disposal of the Dead*

The heat of the climate, by hastening the decomposition of dead bodies, rendered it necessary that corpses should be speedily removed or treated so as to preserve them for a time from decay. As such treatment was generally too costly for the poor and even the middle ranks of society, families belonging to these classes were usually

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 138 *sq.*, 219; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 560 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 413 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 549 *sq.* According to Ellis, the mummers were supposed to be inspired by the spirit of the deceased; according to Moerenhout, they were not inspired by, but merely represented, the ghost. The difference between spiritual representation and inspiration is somewhat fine; too fine perhaps to be apprehended by Tahitian intelligence. Forster says that the procession started from the house of the deceased, Ellis that it started from a valley.

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 322.

obliged to inter their dead on the first or second day after the decease. During the short intervening period the body, resting on a bed of fragrant green leaves, was placed on a sort of bier covered with white cloth and decorated with wreaths and garlands of sweet-smelling flowers. Round it sat the relatives, giving vent to their grief in loud and continued lamentations, and often cutting their temples, faces, and breasts with shark's teeth, till they were covered with blood from their self-inflicted wounds. The bodies were frequently committed to the grave in deep silence; but sometimes a father would deliver a pathetic oration at the funeral of his son.[1] The grave was generally shallow and the corpse was deposited in a bent posture, with the hands tied to the knees or to the legs.[2]

But in the families of chiefs the custom was to submit the bodies of the dead to a sort of embalming and to preserve them above ground for a time.[3] The Tahitians had a tradition of a rude or unpolished period in their history, when the bodies of the dead were allowed to remain in the houses in which they lived, and which were still occupied by the survivors. A kind of stage or altar was erected in the dwelling, and on it the corpse was deposited. But in a later and more polished age, which lasted till the advent of Europeans, the practice was introduced of building separate houses or sheds for the lodgment of corpses.[4]

These houses or sheds (*tupapows*) were small temporary buildings, often neatly constructed. The thatched roof rested on wooden pillars, which were seldom more than six feet high. The body was laid on a bier or platform raised on posts about three feet from the ground. This bier was movable, for the purpose of being drawn out, and of exposing the body to the rays of the sun. The body was usually clothed or covered with cloth, and for a long time it was carefully rubbed with aromatic oils once a day. The size of these charnel-houses varied with the rank of the persons whose bodies they contained; the better sort were enclosed by railings. Those which were allotted to people of the lower class just sufficed to cover the bier, and were not railed in. The

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 399 *sq.*
[2] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 553 *sq.*
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 400.
[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 404.

largest seen by Captain Cook was eleven yards long. Such houses were ornamented according to the taste and abilities of the surviving kindred, who never failed to lay a profusion of good cloth about the body, and sometimes almost covered the outside of the house.[1]

But before the corpse was deposited in one of these temporary structures, it was shrouded in cloth and carried on a bier to the sea-shore, where it was set down on the beach at the water's edge. There a priest, who accompanied the procession, renewed the prayers which he had offered over the body both at the house and on its passage to the shore. Further, he took up water in his hands and sprinkled it towards the corpse, but not upon it. These prayers and sprinklings he repeated several times, and between the repetitions the body was carried back some forty or fifty yards from the sea, only to be brought back again to the water's edge. While these ceremonies were being performed, the temporary house or shed was being prepared, in which the corpse was to remain until the flesh had wholly wasted from the bones. Thither it was then carried from the beach and laid upon the bier.[2]

The practice of embalming appears to have been long familiar to the natives of the Society Islands. The methods employed by them were simple. Sometimes the juices were merely squeezed out of the corpse, which was then exposed to the sun and anointed with fragrant oils. At other times, and apparently more usually, the bowels, entrails, and brains were extracted, and the cavities filled with cloth soaked in perfumed oils, which were also injected into other parts of the body. Scented oils were also rubbed over the outside daily: every day the corpse was exposed to the sun in a sitting posture: every night it was laid out horizontally and often turned over, that it might not remain long on the same side. By these means, combined with the heat of the sun and the dryness of the atmosphere, the process of desiccation was effected in the course of a few weeks: the muscular parts and the eyes shrivelled up; and the wizened body

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 93 *sq.*, 135, 217, 218; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 84, 212 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 404; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 547.

[2] J. Cook, *op. cit.* i. 217 *sq.* Compare J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, p. 559.

resembled a skeleton covered with parchment or oilcloth. Thus reduced to a mummy, it was clothed and fixed in a sitting attitude: a small altar was erected before it; and offerings of fruit, food, and flowers were daily presented by the relatives or by the priest who was appointed to attend to it. For if the deceased was a chief of high rank or great renown, a priest or other person was set apart to wait upon the corpse and to present food to its mouth at different hours of the day. They supposed that the soul still hovered over the mouldering remains and was pleased by such marks of attention. Hence during the exposure of the body in the temporary house the mourners would sometimes renew their lamentations there, and, wounding themselves with shark's teeth, wipe off the blood on a cloth, and deposit the bloody rag beside the mummy as a proof of their affection. In this state the desiccated body was preserved for many months till the flesh had completely decayed; Ellis was of opinion that the best-preserved of these mummies could not be kept for more than twelve months. The bones were then scraped, washed, and buried within the precincts of the family temple (*morai*), if the deceased was a chief; but if he was a commoner, they were interred outside of the holy ground. However, the skull was not buried with the bones; it was carefully wrapt in fine cloth and kept in a box by the family, it might be for several generations. Sometimes the box containing the skull was deposited at the temple, but often it was hung from the roof of the house.[1] At marriage the skulls of ancestors were sometimes brought out and set before the bride and bridegroom in order, apparently, to place the newly wedded pair under the guardianship of the ancestral spirits who had once animated these relics of mortality.[2] In time of war victorious enemies would sometimes despoil the temples of the vanquished and carry off the bones of famous men interred in them; these they would then subject to the utmost indignity by converting them into chisels, borers, or

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 93 *sq.*, 135 *sq.*, 218, 219, vi. 47 *sq.*; J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 561 *sq.*; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 212 *sq.*, 363 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 400 *sq.*, 404 *sq.*, 405 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 554.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 272, who observes that the survivors "considered the spirits of the proprietors of these skulls as the guardian spirits of the family."

fish-hooks. To prevent this sacrilege the relations of the dead conveyed the bones of their chiefs, and even the bodies of persons who had lately died, to the mountains and hid them in caverns among the most inaccessible rocks and lofty precipices of these wild solitudes.[1] Where the mountains advance to the coast, many of these caves exist in the face of cliffs overhanging the sea; for the most part they are situated in places which Europeans can reach only with the help of ropes and ladders, though the natives, it is said, can clamber up the steepest crags with ease. Few even of the islanders know the situation of the caverns, and fewer still will consent to act as guides to the curious stranger who may wish to explore their recesses; for the fear of the ghosts, who are supposed to haunt these ancient depositories of the dead, is yet deeply rooted in the native mind. Moreover, the mouths of the caves are generally so low and overgrown with shrubs and creepers that they may easily be overlooked by an observer standing in front of them. Some of the grottos are said to be still full of skulls, or were so down to the end of the nineteenth century.[2] The mummies as well as the bones were liable to be captured by an invader, and were esteemed trophies not less glorious than foemen slain in battle. Hence during an invasion the mummies were generally the first things to be carried off for safety to the mountains.[3]

A dangerous pollution was supposed to be contracted by all who had handled a corpse. Hence the persons employed in embalming a body were carefully shunned by every one else so long as the process lasted, because the guilt of the crime for which the deceased had died was supposed to attach in some degree to such as touched his mortal remains. The embalmers did not feed themselves, lest the food, defiled by the touch of their polluted hands, should cause their death; so they were fed by others.[4] This state of uncleanness lasted for a month, during which the tabooed persons were forbidden to handle food as well as to put it into their own mouths.[5]

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 405.
[2] A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder* (Berlin, 1900), pp. 37 *sq.*, 81 *sq.*, 83.
[3] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 364.
[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 403.
[5] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 363.

Again, when the ceremony of depositing the sins of the deceased in a hole[1] was over, all who had touched the body or the garments of the deceased, which were buried or destroyed, fled precipitately into the sea to cleanse themselves from the pollution which they had incurred by contact with the corpse; and they cast into the sea the garments they had worn while they were engaged in the work. Having bathed, they gathered a few pieces of coral from the bottom of the sea, and returning with them to the house, addressed the dead body, saying, "With you may the pollution be." With these words they threw down the pieces of coral on the top of the hole that had been dug to receive all the objects defiled by their connexion with the deceased.[2]

When a person had died of an infectious disorder, the priests entreated him to bury the disease with him in the grave and not to inflict it upon other people, when he revisited them as a ghost. They also threw a plantain into the grave, and either buried with him or burned all his utensils, that nobody might be infected by them.[3]

§ 9. *The Fate of the Soul after Death*

The natives of the Society Islands believed in the immortality of the human soul, or at all events in its separate existence after death[4]; they thought that no person perishes or becomes extinct.[5] On its departure from the body the spirit, now called a *tee*, *teehee*, or *tii*, was supposed to linger near its old habitation, whether the mouldering remains exposed on the bier, or the bones buried in the earth, or the skull kept in its box. In this state the spirits were believed to lodge in small wooden images, seldom more than eighteen inches high, which were placed round about the burial-ground.[6] These images are variously said to have borne the same name (*tee*, *teehee*) as the spirits which inhabited them,[7] or to have been called by a different

[1] See above, p. 305.
[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 403.
[3] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 364.
[4] J Cook, *Voyages*, i. 222, vi. 150.
[5] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 345.
[6] J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 552, 553; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 151 *sq.*
[7] J. R. Forster and G. Forster, *ll.cc.*

name (*unus*).[1] Specimens of these images were seen by George Forster in Tahiti. He says that round about the *marai* (*morai*) of Aheatua, at that time King of Tiarroboo, "were placed perpendicularly, or nearly so, fifteen slender pieces of wood, some about eighteen feet long, in which six or eight diminutive human figures of a rude unnatural shape were carved, standing above each other, male or female promiscuously, yet so that the uppermost was always a male. All these figures faced the sea, and perfectly resembled some which are carved on the sterns of their canoes, and which they call *e-tee*."[2] To the same effect George Forster's father, J. R. Forster, observes that "near the *marais* are twenty or thirty single pieces of wood fixed into the ground, carved all over on one side with figures about eighteen inches long, rudely representing a man and a woman alternately, so that often more than fifteen or twenty figures may be counted on one piece of wood, called by them *Teehee*."[3] But the souls of the dead, though they inhabited chiefly the wooden figures erected at the temples or burial-grounds (*marais*, *morais*), were by no means confined to them, and were dreaded by the natives, who believed that during the night these unquiet spirits crept into people's houses and ate the heart and entrails of the sleepers, thus causing their death.[4]

However, the Society Islanders appear to have been by no means consistent in the views which they held concerning the fate of the soul after death. Like many other people, they seem to have wavered between a belief

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 348, "the *unus*, or curiously carved pieces of wood marking the sacred places of interment, and emblematical of *tiis* or spirits."

[2] G. Forster, *op. cit.* i. 267. Compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 461, "*Les images des Tiis étaient placées aux extrémités des marais et gardaient l'enceinte des terres sacrées.*"

[3] J. R. Forster, *op. cit.* pp. 544 *sq.* In the southern peninsula of Tahiti, both on the coast and inland, Captain Cook saw many sepulchral buildings, and he described them as "decorated with many carved boards, which were set upright, and on the top of which were various figures of birds and men: on one in particular there was the representation of a cock, which was painted red and yellow, to imitate the feathers of that animal, and rude images of men were, in some of them, placed one upon the head of another." See J. Cook, *Voyages*, i. 150 *sq.* These "carved boards" were no doubt of the same sort as the *tees* or *teehees* described by the two Forsters. No other writer seems to mention the figures of birds carved on them.

[4] J. R. Forster, *op. cit.* p. 543.

that the souls of the dead lingered invisible near their old homes and the belief that the disembodied spirits went away to a distant land, where all human souls, which have departed this life, met and dwelt together. Or perhaps it might be more correct to say, that instead of wavering between these two inconsistent beliefs, they held them both firmly without perceiving their inconsistency. At all events these islanders believed that either at death or at some time after it their souls departed to a distant place called *po* or Night, the common abode of gods and of departed spirits.[1] Thither the soul was conducted by other spirits, and on its arrival it was eaten by the gods, not all at once, but by degrees. They imagined that the souls of ancestors or relatives, who ranked among the gods, scraped the different parts of the newly arrived spirit with a kind of serrated shell at different times, after which they ate and digested it. If the soul underwent this process of being eaten and digested three separate times, it became a deified or imperishable spirit and might visit the world and inspire living folk.[2] According to one account, the soul was cooked whole in an earth-oven, as pigs are baked on earth, and was then placed in a basket of coco-nut leaves before being served up to the god whom the deceased had worshipped in life. "By this cannibal divinity he was now eaten up; after which, through some inexplicable process, the dead and devoured man emanated from the body of the god, and became immortal."[3] In the island of Raiatea the great god Oro was supposed to use a scallop-shell "to scrape the flesh from the bones of newly deceased bodies, previous to their being converted into pure spirits by being devoured by him, and afterwards transformed by passing through the laboratory of his cannibal stomach."[4] This process of being devoured by a god was not conceived of as a punishment inflicted on wicked people after death; for good and bad souls had alike to submit to it. Rather, Captain Cook tells

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 396. Compare J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 346; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 431; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 330.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 396 *sq.*; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 433.

[3] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 273; compare *ib.* pp. 330 *sq.*

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 521 *sq.*

us, the natives considered "this coalition with the deity as a kind of purification necessary to be undergone before they enter a state of bliss. For, according to their doctrine, if a man refrain from all connexion with women some months before death, he passes immediately into his eternal mansion, without such a previous union; as if already, by this abstinence, he were pure enough to be exempted from the general lot."[1] A slightly different account of this process of spiritual purification is given by the first missionaries to Tahiti. They say that "when the spirit departs from the body, they have a notion it is swallowed by the *eatōoa* (*atua*) bird, who frequents their burying-places and *morais*, and passes through him in order to be purified, and be united to the deity. And such are afterwards employed by him to attend other human beings and to inflict punishment, or remove sickness, as shall be deemed requisite."[2]

In spite of the purification which the souls of the dead underwent by passing through the body of a god or of a divine bird, they were believed to be not wholly divested of the passions which had actuated them in life on earth. If the souls of former enemies met in the world beyond the grave, they renewed their battles, but apparently to no purpose, since they were accounted invulnerable in this invisible state. Again, when the soul of a dead wife arrived in the spirit land, it was known to the soul of her dead husband, if he had gone before, and the two renewed their acquaintance in a spacious house, called *tourooa*, where the souls of the deceased assembled to recreate themselves with the gods. After that the pair retired to the separate abode of the husband, where they remained for ever and had offspring, which, however, was entirely spiritual; for they were neither married nor were their embraces supposed to be like those of corporeal beings.[3]

In general the situation of *po* or the land of the dead seems to have been left vague and indefinite by the Society Islanders; apparently they did not, like the Western Polynesians, imagine it to be in some far western isle,

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 150. [2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 345 *sq.*
[3] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 150 *sq.*

to reach which the souls of the departed had to cross a wide expanse of sea.[1] However, the natives of Raiatea had very definite ideas on this mysterious subject. They thought that *po* was situated in a mysterious and unexplored cavern at the top of the highest mountain in the island. This cavern, perhaps the crater of a volcano, was said to communicate, by subterranean passages, with a cave on the coast, the opening of which is so small that a child of two years could hardly creep into it. Here an evil spirit (*varu iino*) was said to lurk and, pouncing out on careless passers-by, to drag them into the darkest recesses of his den and devour them. After the conversion of the natives to Christianity the missionaries were shown the spot. Near it were the ruins of a temple of the war god, where multitudes of the corpses of warriors slain in battle had been either buried or left to rot on the ground. The missionaries saw many mouldering fragments of skeletons. Not far off a cape jutted into the sea, up the lofty and precipitous face of which the souls of the dead were said to climb on their way to their long home in the cavern at the top of the mountain. A native informant assured the missionaries that he had often seen them scaling the dizzy crag, both men and women.[2]

In the island of Borabora the fate even of kings after death was believed to be a melancholy one. Their souls were converted into a piece of furniture resembling an English hat-stand; only in Borabora the corresponding utensil was the branch of a tree with the lateral forks cut short, on which bonnets, garments, baskets, and so forth were suspended. The natives very naturally concluded that in the other world a similar stand was wanted for the convenience of the ghosts, to hang their hats and coats on. Kings who shrank from the prospect of being converted into a hat-stand after death made interest with the priest to save them from such a degradation. So when a king who had been great and powerful in life saw his end approaching, he would send to the priests the most costly presents, such as four or five of the largest and fattest hogs, as many of the best canoes, and any rare and valuable European article which he happened

[1] See above, pp. 87 *sq.*, 214 *sqq.*, 238 *sqq.*

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 537 *sq.*

to possess. In return the priests prayed for him daily at the temples till he died; and afterwards his dead body was brought to one of these sacred edifices and kept upright there for several days and nights, during which yet larger gifts were sent by his relatives, and the most expensive sacrifices offered to the idols. The decaying corpse was then removed, placed on a canoe, and rowed out on the lagoon as far as an opening in the reef, only to be brought back again in like manner; while all the time the priests recited their prayers and performed their lugubrious ceremonies over it on the water as well as on the land. Finally, the mouldering remains were laid out to rot on a platform in one of the usual charnel-houses.[1]

Conversion into a hat-stand was not, perhaps, the worst that could happen to the soul of a Society Islander after death. In the island of Raiatea there is a lake surrounded by trees, the tops of which appear curiously flat. On this verdant platform the spirits of the newly departed were said to dance and feast together until, at a subsequent stage of their existence, they were converted into cockroaches.[2] The souls of infants killed at birth were supposed to return in the bodies of grasshoppers.[3]

But the Society Islanders were far from thinking that the souls of the dead herded together indiscriminately in the other world. They imagined that the spirits were discriminated and assigned to abodes of different degrees of happiness or misery, not according to their virtues or vices in this life, but according to the rank which they had occupied in society, one receptacle of superior attractions being occupied by the souls of chiefs and other principal people, while another of an inferior sort sufficed to lodge the souls of the lower orders. For they did not suppose that their good or bad actions in this life affected in the least their lot in the life hereafter, or that the deities took account of any such distinction. Thus their religion exerted no influence on their morality.[4] Happiness and misery in the

[1] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 331 *sq.*

[2] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 522.

[3] J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 455.

[4] J. Cook, i. 222. Compare *id.*, vi. 150; J. R. Forster, *Observations made on a Voyage round the World*, pp. 553 *sqq.*

world beyond the grave, we are told, "were the destiny of individuals, altogether irrespective of their moral character and virtuous conduct. The only crimes that were visited by the displeasure of their deities were the neglect of some rite or ceremony, or the failing to furnish required offerings."[1]

The Society Islanders, especially the natives of the Leeward Islands, believed that some of the souls of the dead were destined to enjoy a kind of heaven or paradise, which they called *Rohutu noanoa*, "sweet-scented Rohutu." This blissful region was supposed to be near a lofty and stupendous mountain in the island of Raiatea, not far from the harbour Hamaniino. The mountain went by the name of *Temehani unauna*, "splendid or glorious Temehani." It was probably the same with the lofty mountain on whose summit popular fancy placed the *po* or common abode of the dead.[2] But the paradise was invisible to mortal eyes, being situated in the regions of the air (*reva*). The country was described as most lovely and enchanting in appearance, adorned with flowers of every shape and hue, and perfumed with odours of every fragrance. The air was pure and salubrious. Every sort of delight was to be enjoyed there; while rich viands and delicious fruits were supplied in abundance for the celebration of sumptuous festivals. Handsome youths and women thronged the place. But these honours and pleasures were only for the privileged orders—the chiefs and the members of the society of the Areois—for only they could afford to pay the heavy charges which the priests exacted for a passport to paradise; common folk seldom or never dreamed of attempting to procure for their relatives admission to the abode of bliss. Even apart from the expense of getting to heaven, it is probable that the sharp distinction kept up between chiefs and commoners here on earth would be expected to be maintained hereafter, and to exclude every person of the humbler sort from the society of his betters in the future life.[3] The other less exclusive, and no doubt less expensive, place for departed spirits, in contrast to

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 397. Compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 433.

[2] See above, p. 317.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 245 *sq.*, 397; J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 434 *sq.*

"sweet-scented Rohutu," went by the significant name of "foul-scented Rohutu"; but over the nature of the substances which earned for it this unsavoury appellation our missionary authority preferred to draw a veil.[1]

According to one account, the souls of the dead were supposed to gather in the sun, where they feasted with the god Maouwe or O-Mauwee (Maui) on bread-fruit and the flesh of pigs or dogs, and drank never-ending draughts of kava.[2]

But wherever the souls of the dead were imagined to dwell, we may infer that they were credited with the power of returning to earth for a longer or shorter time to benefit or injure the living. For we have seen that sickness and death were commonly ascribed to the action of these spirits,[3] which seems to imply that they revisited this sublunary world on their errands of mischief. Accordingly, whenever the natives approached by night one of the charnel-houses in which dead bodies were exposed, they were startled "in the same manner that many of our ignorant and superstitious people are with the apprehension of ghosts, and at the sight of a churchyard." Again, the souls of the departed were sometimes thought to communicate with their friends in dreams and to announce to them things that should afterwards come to pass, thus enabling the dreamer to foretell the future. Foreknowledge thus acquired, however, was confined to particular persons, and such favoured dreamers enjoyed a reputation little inferior to that of the inspired priests. One of them prophesied to Captain Cook on the strength of a communication vouchsafed to him by the soul of his deceased father in a dream; but the event proved that the ghost was out in his reckoning by five days.[4]

The fear of ghosts in the minds of the Society Islanders has long survived their conversion to Christianity; indeed, we are informed that it is as rampant as ever. No ordinary native would dare to visit one of the lonely caves where the mouldering bones or skulls of his forefathers were deposited

[1] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, p. 476.

[2] J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, p. 553; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 151.

[3] See above, pp. 299 *sqq*.

[4] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 152.

for safety in days of old.[1] At one point on the western coast of Tahiti, where the mountains advance in precipices close to the sea, the road which skirts their base is a place of fear to the natives. For in these precipices are caves full of skulls, and the ghosts who reside in the caverns are reported sometimes to weary of their own society and to come down to the road for company, where in a sportive vein they play all sorts of tricks on passers-by. Not so long ago three Tahitians were riding home at dusk from Papeete, where they had been drinking rum. Just at the pass under the cliff they were surprised by ghosts, who threw them into the ditch at the side of the road. So great is the dread which the natives entertain of apparitions at this spot that the Government has been compelled to divert the road, so that it no longer skirts the foot of the haunted mountain, but gives it a wide berth, and runs in a long sweep by the edge of the sea.[2]

Again, at another point on the west coast of Tahiti, where mighty mountains, a glorious sea, and little coral islands with their groves of palms, offer a view of enchanting beauty, there is said to be a cave containing the skulls of chiefs in a jutting cliff half-way up the mountain. The cave was in charge of an old man in whose family the office of guardian was hereditary. It had been entrusted to him by his father on his deathbed, and the son had kept the secret faithfully ever since. In vain did a traveller seek to persuade the old man to guide him to the cave; in vain did the chief himself beg of him to reveal the grotto which concealed the mouldering relics of his forefathers. The guardian was obdurate; he believed that the world was not wide enough to hold two men who knew the holy place. He assured the traveller that nobody could reach the cave without the help of the ghosts, so perpendicular and so smooth was the face of the cliff that led up to it. When he himself wished to make his way to it, his custom was to go to the foot of the crag and pray, till the spirits came and wafted him lightly up and down again; otherwise it would have been a sheer impossibility for him to ascend and descend.[3]

[1] A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder*, p. 37.

[2] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 83 *sq.*

[3] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 81 *sq.*

§ 10. *The Worship of the Dead*

The belief in the existence of the spirits of the dead, and in their power to help or harm the living, naturally led the Society Islanders, like so many other peoples of the world, to propitiate these powerful beings, to sue their favour, or to appease their anger by prayer and sacrifice, in short, to worship them. On this subject the first missionaries to these islanders tell us that, in addition to the greater gods, "for general worship they have an inferior race, a kind of *dii penates*. Each family has its *tee* or guardian spirit: he is supposed to be one of their departed relatives, who, for his superior excellences, has been exalted into an *eatooa* (*atua*). They suppose this spirit can inflict sickness or remove it, and preserve them from a malignant deity who also bears the name *tee*, and is always employed in mischief."[1] "Every family has its *tee*, or guardian spirit, whom they set up, and worship at the *morai*."[2] "They regard the spirits of their ancestors, male and female, as exalted into *eatooas* (*atuas*), and their favour to be secured by prayers and offerings. Every sickness and untoward accident they esteem as the hand of judgment for some offence committed."[3] As for the mischievous spirit who bore the same name as the worshipful spirit of a dead ancestor, the missionaries say that "the evil demon named *Tee* has no power but upon earth; and this he exercises by getting into them with their food, and causing madness or other diseases; but these they imagine their tutelar saints, if propitious, can prevent or remove."[4]

We may suspect that the missionaries were mistaken in thus sharply distinguishing between an "evil demon" and a "tutelar saint," both of whom went by the same name (*tee*). Probably the "evil demon" and the "tutelar saint" were alike supposed to be souls of dead persons, with this difference between them, that whereas the one had been good and beneficent in his life, the other had been bad and maleficent;

[1] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 344.
[2] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 343.
[3] J. Wilson, *op. cit.* p. 345. "The general name for deity, in all its ramifications, is *eatooa*" (*id.*, p. 343).
[4] J. Wilson, p. 346.

for it is a common belief that the dead retain in the other world the character and disposition which they manifested on earth, and that accordingly as disembodied spirits they may benefit or injure their surviving relatives.[1] Thus according to his character and behaviour in this present state of existence a person's ghost may naturally develop either into a god or into a devil.

It is to be feared that in the case of Tahitian ghosts the course of spiritual evolution was rather in the direction of devilry than of deity. At least this conclusion seems forced on us by the account which William Ellis, perhaps our best authority on Tahitian religion, gives of the character of these worshipful beings. I will reproduce it in his own words.

"The objects of worship among the Tahitians, next to the *atua* or gods, were the *oramatuas tiis* or spirits. These were supposed to reside in the *po*, or world of night, and were never invoked but by wizards or sorcerers, who implored their aid for the destruction of an enemy, or the injury of some person whom they were hired to destroy. They were considered a different order of beings from the gods, a kind of intermediate class between them and the human race, though in their prayers all the attributes of the gods were ascribed to them. The *oramatuas* were the spirits of departed fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, etc. The natives

[1] In confirmation of my conjecture that the missionaries mistook a general name (*tee*, otherwise spelled *tii*) for the name of a particular demon, I may point out that the naturalist J. R. Forster before them seems to have fallen into precisely the same mistake with regard to another general name for departed spirits (*oramatuas* or *oromatuas*). Thus he writes: "Besides these divinities of the second class, there are others of a still inferior rank, and though called *Eatooas*, are no more than what the Greek or Roman mythologists would have called *Genii*, or *Dii minorum gentium*: one of them, called *Orometooa*, is of a malignant disposition, resides chiefly near the *Marais* and *Toopapous* (places of burial) and in or near the boxes, or little chests, including the heads of their deceased friends, each of which, on that account, is called *Te-wharre no te Orometooa*, the house of the evil genius *Orometooa*. The people at Taheitee are of opinion, that if their priests invoke this evil genius, he will kill, by a sudden death, the person on whom they intend to bring down the vengeance of this divinity." See J. R. Forster, *Observations made during a Voyage round the World*, pp. 541 *sq*. In this passage we can hardly doubt that "this evil genius," Orometooa, is simply the *oramatuas* or *oromatuas*, the spirits of the dead, by means of whom sorcerers were supposed to injure or destroy any one at whom they or their employers had a grudge. See above, p. 299, and below, pp. 323 *sqq*.

were greatly afraid of them, and presented offerings to avoid being cursed or destroyed, when they were employed by the sorcerers.

"They seem to have been regarded as a sort of demons. In the Leeward Islands, the chief *oramatuas* were spirits of departed warriors, who had distinguished themselves by ferocity and murder, attributes of character usually supposed to belong to these evil genii. Each celebrated *tii* was honoured with an image, through which it was supposed his influence was exerted. The spirits of the reigning chiefs were united to this class, and the skulls of deceased rulers, kept with the images, were honoured with the same worship. Some idea of what was regarded as their ruling passion, may be inferred from the fearful apprehensions constantly entertained by all classes. They were supposed to be exceedingly irritable and cruel, avenging with death the slightest insult or neglect, and were kept within the precincts of the temple. In the *marae* of Tane at Maeva, the ruins of their abode were still standing when I last visited the place. It was a house built upon a number of large strong poles, which raised the floor ten or twelve feet from the ground. They were thus elevated, to keep them out of the way of men, as it was imagined they were constantly strangling, or otherwise destroying, the chiefs and people. To prevent this, they were also treated with great respect; men were appointed constantly to attend them, and to keep them wrapped in the choicest kinds of cloth, to take them out whenever there was a *pae atua*, or general exhibition of the gods; to anoint them frequently with fragrant oil; and to sleep in the house with them at night. All this was done, to keep them pacified. And though the office of calming the angry spirits was honourable, it was regarded as dangerous, for if, during the night or at any other time, these keepers were guilty of the least impropriety, it was supposed the spirits of the images, or the skulls, would hurl them headlong from their high abodes, and break their necks in the fall." [1]

The difference in power and dignity between the great national gods (*atuas*) and the spirits of deceased relations (*oramatuas tiis*) might be measured by the size of their

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 334-336.

images; for whereas the images of the gods were six or eight feet long, those of the spirits were not more than so many inches.[1] But while these malignant and irritable spirits—the souls of dead fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and children—resided generally either in their little images or in their skulls, they were not strictly confined to these material vehicles; they resorted occasionally to the shells from the seashore, especially to a beautiful kind of murex, the *Murex ramoces*. These shells were kept by the sorcerers, and the peculiar singing or humming sound that may be heard when the valve is applied to the ear was imagined to proceed from the demon in the shell.[2]

It was these malignant and dangerous demons whom the sorcerer employed as his agents to execute his fell purposes. But to effect them he had to secure something connected with the body of his intended victim, it might be the parings of his nails, a lock of his hair, his spittle or other bodily secretions, or else a portion of the food which he was about to eat. Over this material substance, whatever it was, the sorcerer recited his incantations and performed his magical rites either in his own house or in his private temple (*marae*). The result was believed to be that the demon entered into the substance, and through it passed into the body of the man at whom the enchanter aimed his elfish darts. The wretched sufferer experienced the acutest agonies; his distortions were frightful to witness; his eyes seemed starting from his head; he foamed at the mouth; he lay writhing in anguish on the ground; in short, to adopt the native expression, he was torn by the evil spirit. Yet his case was not hopeless; the demon could be mollified by a bribe, or defeated by the intervention of a more powerful demon. Hence, when any one was believed to be suffering from the incantations of a sorcerer, if he or his friends were rich enough they engaged another sorcerer for a fee to counteract the spells of the first and so to restore the health of the invalid. It was generally supposed that the efforts of the second sorcerer would be crowned with success if only the demon whom he employed were equally powerful with that at the command of his rival, and if the presents which he received for his

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 337. [2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 363.

professional services were more valuable. In order to avoid the danger of being thus bewitched through the refuse of their persons, the Tahitians used scrupulously to burn or bury their shorn hair, lest it should fall into the hands of enchanters.[1]

It is possible that some even of the great national gods were no more than ghosts of dead men, whose human origin was forgotten. There is some reason for supposing that this was true of Hiro, the god of thieves. On the one hand, this deity was reputed to be the son of the great god Oro ;[2] and when a mother desired her child to grow up a clever thief, she repaired to a temple, where the priest, on receipt of the requisite offerings, caught the spirit of the god in a snare and infused it into the infant, thus ensuring the future proficiency of the infant in the arts of theft and robbery.[3] Yet, in spite of these claims to divinity, there are some grounds for thinking that Hiro was himself originally no better than a thief and a robber. He is said to have been a native of Raiatea, from whose sacrilegious fingers not even the temples and altars of the gods were safe. His skull was shown in a large temple of his own construction in that island down to the early years of the nineteenth century. His hair, too, was stuffed into the image of his reputed father, the god Oro, and perished when that image was committed to the flames by the early converts to Christianity.[4]

Once a year the Society Islanders celebrated a festival accompanied by rites, of which one has been compared to the Roman Catholic custom of performing a mass for the benefit of souls in purgatory. The festival was called "the ripening of the year," and the time for its observance was determined by the blossoming of reeds. It was regularly observed in the island of Huahine, and vast multitudes assembled to take part in it. As a rule, only men engaged in the pagan festivals, but at this particular one women and children were also present, though they were not allowed to enter the sacred enclosure. The celebration was regarded

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 363-370.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iii. 112, 125.

[3] J. Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, pp. 466 *sq.*

[4] D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 254 *sq.* As to Hiro, the god of thieves, see also J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 447-449.

as a kind of annual acknowledgment made to the gods. Prayers were offered at the temple, and a sumptuous banquet formed part of the festival. At the close of the festival every one returned to his home, or to his family temple (*marae*), there to offer special prayers for the spirits of departed relatives, that they might be liberated from the *po*, or state of Night, and might either ascend to paradise ("sweet-scented Rohutu") or return to this world by entering into the body of one of its inhabitants. But "they did not suppose, according to the generally received doctrine of transmigration, that the spirits who entered the body of some dweller upon earth, would permanently remain there, but only come and inspire the person to declare future events, or execute any other commission from the supernatural beings on whom they imagined they were constantly dependent." [1]

Hence we learn that the spirits of the dead as well as the gods were believed to be capable of inspiring men and revealing to them the future. In this, as in other respects, the dead were assimilated to deities.

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 351 *sq.* Compare J. A. Moerenhout, *op. cit.* i. 502 note [1], 523.

CHAPTER VI

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE MARQUESANS

§ 1. *The Marquesas Islands*

THE Marquesas are an archipelago of eleven or twelve chief islands in the South Pacific, situated about nine hundred miles to the north-east of Tahiti. They fall into two groups, which together stretch in a direction from north-west to south-east, from 8° to 11° of South latitude. The south-eastern group, of which Hivaoa (Dominica) is the largest island, was discovered by the Spanish Admiral Alvaro Mendana de Neyra in 1595, but, so far as appears, it was not again visited by Europeans until 1774, when Captain Cook touched at the islands on his second voyage. Curiously enough, the north-westerly group, of which Nukahiva is the largest and most important island, remained unknown until 1791, when it was discovered by the American Captain Ingraham, who named the group the Washington Islands. About a month later, in June 1791, the French navigator Marchand visited the same islands, and in 1797 the first missionary, William Crook, was landed from the missionary ship *Duff*. The whole archipelago is now known as the Marquesas, a name which the Spanish Admiral Mendana bestowed on the islands discovered by him in honour of the Marquess de Canete, Viceroy of Peru, by whose order the voyage had been undertaken.[1]

[1] Captain J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 274 *sqq.*; G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 5 *sqq.*; C. P. Claret Fleurieu, *Voyage round the World performed by E. Marchand* (London, 1801), i. 27 *sqq.*, 55 *sqq.*; J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. lxxiii. *sqq.*, 127 *sqq.*; A. J. von Krusenstern, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1813), i. 136; Vincendon-

The islands are of volcanic formation, lofty and mountainous. The interior consists generally of a range of mountains some three thousand feet high, from which a series of spurs descend steeply to the coast, terminating for the most part in tremendous cliffs, at the foot of which the great rollers break in foam ; for with a single exception there are no coral reefs, and a ship can sail in deep water within a cable's length of the rocks. Viewed at a distance from the sea, the aspect of the islands is somewhat stern and forbidding. Bare mountains, jagged peaks, sometimes lost in the clouds, and an iron-bound coast of black and beetling crags, buffeted eternally by the surf, make up a gloomy picture ; but a nearer view discloses verdant valleys nestling between the ridges which radiate from the central mountains. These valleys are watered by mountain streams and clothed with dense tropical vegetation, their luxuriant green offering an agreeable contrast to the bareness and aridity of the frowning precipices and sharp peaks which soar above them. Cascades tumbling from high cliffs into the depths of the glens add to the beauty and charm of the scenery. So steep and precipitous are the ridges which divide these smiling vales from each other that the ascent and descent are in many places both difficult and dangerous even for the natives ; European mountaineers need to have stout limbs and steady heads to accomplish them in safety. Hence in former days each valley contained a separate tribe, which was commonly in a state of permanent hostility towards its neighbours across the mountain barriers.[1] Of these tribes

Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Îles Marquises ou Nouka-hiva* (Paris, 1843), pp. 1 *sqq.*, 12 *sq.* ; Le P. Mathias G***, *Lettres sur les Îles Marquises* (Paris, 1843), pp. 7 *sqq.* ; P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *L'Archipel des Iles Marquises* (Paris, 1877), pp. 1 *sqq.* ; C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans*, ii. 235 *sq.* ; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 522.

[1] As to the formation and scenery of the islands, see Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 110 ; C. S. Stewart, *Visit to the South Seas* (London, 1832), i. 193 *sqq.* ; F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe* (London, 1840), i. 299 *sqq.* ; H. Melville, *Typee*, pp. 8 *sq.*, 17 *sq.*, and *passim* (*Everyman's Library*) ; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 138 *sq.* ; P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 84 *sq.* ; Clavel, *Les Marquisiens* (Paris, 1885) pp. 1 *sq.* ; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.* ii. 236 *sq.* ; F. H. H. Guillemard, *op. cit.* pp. 522 *sq.* ; A. Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder* (Berlin, 1900), pp. 192 *sq.*, 220 *sqq.* As to the extreme difficulty of scaling the mountains and precipices to pass from one valley to another, see particularly M. Radiguet, *Les Derniers Sauvages* (Paris, 1882), pp. 101 *sq.*, note.

the most famous were the warlike and dreaded Taipiis or Typees, who occupied a beautiful valley at the eastern end of Nukahiva, and in their mountain fastness deemed themselves inaccessible to their enemies. However, in the early part of the nineteenth century an American naval officer, Captain David Porter, succeeded, not without great difficulty, in carrying havoc and devastation into these sylvan scenes.[1] Later in the century a runaway American sailor, Hermann Melville, spent more than four months as a captive in the tribe, and published an agreeable narrative of his captivity; but never having mastered the language, he was not able to give much exact information concerning the customs and beliefs of the natives.[2] As there is no maritime plain interposed between the mountains and the shore, the only way of passing from one valley to another is either to go by sea or to clamber over the intervening ridges. It would be materially impossible, we are told, unless at enormous and ruinous cost, to make a road or even a mule-path round any of the Marquesas Islands, as has been done in Tahiti.[3]

Despite their situation in the heart of the tropics, the Marquesas enjoy an extremely healthy climate subject to none of the inconveniences usually incidental to countries in the same latitude; endemic and epidemic diseases are alike unknown. European soldiers can work in the sun without accident and without exhaustion.[4] The climate has been described as an eternal spring, without winter or even autumn; though a perpetual succession of ripe fruits may seem to lend an autumnal air to the landscape, which yet is never chilled by hoar frosts or saddened by the sight of bare boughs and fallen leaves.[5] Even in the hottest days a cool wind blows from the sea, and at night there is a breeze from the land. Rain falls during some months of the year, especially from May or June to August or September; but

[1] Captain David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean*, Second Edition (New York, 1822), ii. 86 *sqq.*

[2] H. Melville, *Typee* (London, *Everyman's Library*, no date). The first edition of this book was published in 1846. Melville's residence among the Taipiis (Typees) fell in the year 1841.

[3] P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 85.

[4] M. Radiguet, *Les Derniers Sauvages* (Paris, 1882), pp. 304 *sq.*; P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 57.

[5] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 94.

on the whole there is little variation in the seasons;[1] the Marquesan year has been described as one long tropical month of June just melting into July.[2] Yet we are told that the northern islands sometimes suffer from droughts which may last for years; at such times vegetation languishes, till a fresh cloud-burst restores the verdure of the trees and grass as by magic.[3] It is then, too, that the cascades everywhere enliven the landscape by the glitter and roar of their tumbling waters, which, after dropping from the height, flow rapidly down their steep beds into the sea.[4]

§ 2. *Physical Appearance of the Natives*

Observers are generally agreed that from the purely physical point of view the Marquesan islanders are, or used to be, the noblest specimens of the Polynesian race. Captain Cook remarked that "the inhabitants of these islands collectively are, without exception, the finest race of people in this sea. For fine shape and regular features, they perhaps surpass all other nations."[5] To the same effect the naturalist George Forster, who accompanied Captain Cook, gives his impression of a crowd of Marquesan men, among whom were no women. He says: "They were tall, and extremely well limbed; not one of them unwieldy or corpulent like a Taheitian, nor meagre and shrivelled like a native of Easter Island. The punctuation" (by which he meant the tattooing) "which almost entirely covered the men of a middle age, made it difficult to distinguish their elegance of form; but among the youths, who were not yet marked or tattooed, it was easy to discover beauties singularly striking, and often without a blemish, such as demanded the admiration of all beholders. Many of them might be placed near the famous models of antiquity, and would not suffer in the comparison:

> "*Qualis aut Nireus fuit, aut aquosa*
> *Raptus ab Ida.*"
>
> HOR.

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[1] P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 57. Compare M. Radiguet, *Les Derniers Sauvages*, pp. 304 *sq.*

[2] H. Melville, *Typee*, p. 220.

[3] A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 222 *sq.*

[4] M. Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 304.

[5] J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 284.

"The natural colour of these youths was not quite so dark as that of the common people in the Society Isles; but the men appeared to be infinitely blacker, on account of the punctures which covered their whole body, from head to foot. These punctures were disposed with the utmost regularity; so that the marks on each leg, arm, and cheek, and on the corresponding muscles, were exactly similar. They never assumed the determinate form of an animal or plant, but consisted of a variety of blotches, spirals, bars, chequers, and lines, which had a most motley appearance."[1]

Similarly, speaking of the Taipiis or Typees, Melville observes, "In beauty of form they surpassed anything I had ever seen. Not a single instance of natural deformity was observable in all the throng attending the revels. Occasionally I noticed among the men the scars of wounds they had received in battle; and sometimes, though very seldom, the loss of a finger, an eye, or an arm, attributable to the same cause. With these exceptions, every individual appeared free from those blemishes which sometimes mar the effect of an otherwise perfect form. But their physical excellence did not merely consist in an exemption from these evils; nearly every individual of their number might have been taken for a sculptor's model."[2] As to their stature, the same writer affirms that "the men, in almost every instance, are of lofty stature, scarcely ever less than six feet."[3] Similarly Captain Porter tell us that "they are far above the common stature of the human race, seldom less than five feet eleven inches, but most commonly six feet two or three inches, and every way proportioned. Their faces are remarkably handsome, with keen, piercing eyes; teeth white, and more beautiful than ivory; countenances open and expressive, which reflect every emotion of their souls; limbs which might serve as models for a statuary, and strength and activity proportioned to their appearance."[4] Another observer remarks of them that "the natives bear the palm for

[1] G. Forster, *Voyage round the World*, ii. 14 *sq.* Compare Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 152 *sq.*; U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1814), p. 85; G. H. von Langsdorff, *Reise um die Welt* (Frankfurt am Mayn, 1812), i. 92 *sqq.*; Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 96 *sqq.*; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 216 *sqq.*; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 39.

[2] H. Melville, *Typee*, p. 194.

[3] H. Melville, *Typee*, p. 195.

[4] David Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 58 *sq.*

personal beauty from most other of the Polynesian tribes. The men are tall and muscular, though rather slightly framed; their deportment is graceful and independent; their features are handsome, and partake more of the European regularity of profile than is usual with Polynesian islanders."[1] The nose is straight or aquiline, sometimes short or slightly flattened, but never ill-shaped: the mouth is never large nor the lips thick: the forehead is rather low and somewhat retreating.[2] The hair is almost always straight or wavy; men or women with frizzly hair are very seldom seen, especially in the north-western group. The colour of the skin, where it is not darkened by tattooing, is a clear brown, resembling the bronzed appearance acquired by Europeans through exposure to a tropical sun.[3] The women are both absolutely and relatively shorter than the men; indeed Melville describes them as "uncommonly diminutive." Their complexion is lighter; in the parts of the body which are seldom exposed to the sun they are even said to appear as white as European women. Their features are good, but rather pretty than beautiful; their hands and feet are very shapely. Unlike the men, who are, or used to be, tattooed from head to foot, the women were tattooed very little, and that chiefly on the lips.[4] They took pains to whiten their skin by avoiding exposure to the sun and by washing themselves with the juice of a small native vine,[5] or by smearing themselves with a cosmetic in which the yellow of the turmeric root predominated.[6]

§ 3. *Food, Weapons, Tools, Houses, Canoes, Fishing*

The Marquesans subsist chiefly on a vegetable diet. Their staple food is the bread-fruit, and their national dish is a paste called *popoi*, which is prepared from bread-fruit after it has been subjected to a process of fermentation. Fish

[1] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 304.

[2] M. Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 169.

[3] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 39.

[4] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 39 *sq.*; H. Melville, *Typee*, p. 195.

[5] C. S. Stewart, *Visit to the South Seas*, i. 231 *sq.*, who speaks highly of the beauty of the women. But the general opinion appears to be that the Marquesan women are much less handsome than the men. See Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 94-96; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 59.

[6] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 308 *sq.*

is also a common article of diet; the natives usually eat it raw, even when it is rotten and stinking. They keep pigs, but seldom kill them except for a festival or at the reception of a stranger. Hence pork is not a regular or common article of diet with them; and apart from it they hardly taste flesh. Other sorts of food, such as bananas, taro, and sugar-cane, are entirely subsidiary to the great staples, bread-fruit and fish. The natives do not readily accustom themselves to a European diet; indeed when the experiment has been made of feeding them exclusively in our manner, they have wasted away and only recovered their health when they were allowed to return to their usual nourishment. Their ordinary beverage was water, but they were also addicted to the drinking of kava, which was extracted from the root of the *Piper methysticum* in the usual fashion.[1] Drawing their sustenance chiefly from the bread-fruit tree, the Marquesans paid little attention to the cultivation of the soil; however, they grew a certain amount of taro, sweet potatoes, and sugar-cane; and they had plantations of the paper-mulberry,[2] the bark of which was manufactured by the women into cloth in the ordinary way. But the bark of other trees was also employed for the same purpose. Since the natives were able to procure European stuffs, the indigenous manufacture of bark-cloth has much declined.[3] Hence agriculture engaged the men very little; fishing, though it was part of their business, they are said to have neglected; the only work of consequence they did was to build their houses and manufacture their arms, but these employments occupied them only occasionally.[4]

[1] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 42-44; Clavel, *Les Marquisiens*, pp. 3 *sqq.* Compare G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 27 *sq.*; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 106-108; Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 115 *sq.*; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 50-55; F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 316 *sq.*; H. Melville, *Typee*, pp. 120-124, 179; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 277 *sq.*; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 138 *sq.*, 144 *sq.*; A. Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 208-211. As to the preparation and drinking of kava among the Marquesans, see also M. Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 64-66.

[2] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 164; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 53; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 213 *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 345 (who says that the only root the natives cultivate for food is the sweet potato); Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 148, 149; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 18.

[3] Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 122 *sq.*; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 116; Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 337 *sq.*; Melville, *Typee*, pp. 158-160, 210; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 137 *sq.*; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 53 *sq.*; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* 55 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* 19.

[4] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 164.

The weapons of the warriors were clubs, spears, and slings. The slings were made of coco-nut fibre, and the natives were very expert in the use of them. Bows and arrows were unknown.[1] Like the rest of the Polynesians, the Marquesans were totally ignorant of the metals until they acquired them from Europeans. Their tools were made of stone, bone, and shell. Thus they employed a pointed stone to bore holes with, and an axe of black, hard stone for cutting. The axe-head was shaped like an elongated wedge or mortise-chisel, and was fastened to the haft by coco-nut fibre. Some of these axes weighed as much as twenty-five pounds. The natives also used sharp-edged or toothed shells as cutting implements, and borers made of pointed bones; while rough fish-skins served them as polishers.[2] Like the rest of the Polynesians, they kindled fire by the method known as the stick-and-groove, that is, by rubbing the sharp point of one stick against the flat surface of another, so as to form a groove in it and, by continued friction, to elicit smoke and a glow, which, with the help of dry leaves, is nursed into a flame. Contrary to the usage of some peoples, the Marquesans employed the same kind of wood for both the fire-sticks, either a species of hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) or a species of poplar (*Thespesia populnea*); for this purpose they split a branch in two, lengthwise, and used the two pieces as the fire-sticks. In former days these fire-sticks were regularly kept in every native house.[3]

The Marquesan houses are regularly built on stone platforms, oblong or square in shape, and raised above the ground to heights varying from one to four, eight, or even ten feet. The higher platforms are approached from the ground by ladders or notched poles. The houses, constructed of timber and bamboo, are oblong in shape, and comprise a high back wall, generally inclined forward at an angle, from which the thatched roof slopes down steeply to a low front wall, while two short walls close the house at either end. The door is

[1] Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 118 *sq.*; Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 162; Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 88; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 152 (bows and arrows unknown); Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 282 *sq.*

[2] Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 121; Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 162.

[3] H. Melville, *Typee*, pp. 118 *sq.*; Clavel, *Les Marquisiens*, pp. 11 *sq.* Compare G. Forster, *op. cit.* ii. 20; D. Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 116; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 143.

in the middle of the front wall, and is so low that it is necessary to stoop in entering. Sometimes the fronts of the houses are entirely open except for the low pillars which support the roof. The interior of the house forms a single chamber undivided by partitions. Two trunks of coco-nut palms extend parallel to each other along the whole length of the floor at an interval of four or five feet; the innermost log, a foot or two distant from the back wall, forms a pillow on which the heads of the sleepers rest, while the other supports their feet or legs. The space between the two logs is paved with stone, and spread with mats. In the single apartment the whole family live and sleep. Such at least were the domestic arrangements in the old days. The size of the houses naturally varies. Some of them measure eighty feet by forty, others only twenty-five feet by ten, or even less.[1]

The platforms on which the houses are built consist often of large blocks of stone neatly and regularly laid without mortar or cement, in a style which would do no discredit to European masons.[2] Sometimes the stones are described as enormous blocks of rock,[3] some of which would require ten or twelve men to carry or roll them.[4] Water-worn boulders, washed down from the mountains in the bed of torrents, were especially chosen for the purpose.[5]

Sometimes, though far less commonly, Marquesan houses were raised above the ground on posts from eight or ten to sixteen feet high. Such houses were lightly built of wood and thatched; the floor was an open work of split bamboos. Sometimes these raised dwellings resembled the ordinary Marquesan house in structure; at other times they were quadrangular, with perpendicular walls and an ordinary roof. They were approached by ladders and resembled the

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 285 *sq.*; G. Forster, *op. cit.* pp. 21, 24; J. Wilson, *op. cit.* pp. 131, 134 *sq.*; Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 84; Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 159; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 109-111; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 39 *sq.*; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 209-211, 212, 267 *sq.*; Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 302 *sq.*; Melville, *Typee*, pp. 81-83; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 274-276; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 122-129; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 36-38; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 44 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 15 *sq.*; Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 200-208.

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 109 *sq.*

[3] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 129.

[4] Langsdorff, *l.c.*

[5] Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 15.

habitations in use among the Malay tribes of the Indian Archipelago. No dwellings of this type have been noticed in Nukahiva, the principal island of the archipelago; but they have been seen and described in Tauata (Santa Christina) and Hivaoa (Dominica).[1]

The Marquesans built canoes of various sizes, the smaller for fishing, the larger for war. These latter might be from forty to fifty feet long. They were fitted with outriggers. The prow had an ornamental projection rudely carved to represent the head of an animal. Sometimes the prows of war canoes were decorated with the skulls of slaughtered enemies. But in general the Marquesans appear to have been inferior to the other South Sea islanders in the arts of canoe-building and navigation.[2] This inferiority may perhaps have been partly due to the absence of those lagoons which, formed by coral reefs, elsewhere enabled the natives to acquire confidence and skill in sailing on smooth and sheltered waters. The same cause may also, perhaps, explain why fishing was comparatively little practised by the Marquesans. We are told that as an occupation it was despised by such as owned a piece of land of any extent, and that only the poorer class of people, who depended on the sea for a livelihood, addicted themselves to it. They caught fish by means both of nets and of lines with hooks neatly made of mother-of-pearl; also they stupefied the fish by a certain mashed root, which the fisherman distributed in the water by diving, and then caught the fish as they rose to the surface.[3]

§ 4. *Polyandry, Adoption, Exchange of Names*

The social life of the Marquesan islanders presented some peculiar features. Thus they are said to have practised the rare custom of polyandry. On this subject Stewart observes: "We have yet met with no instance, in any rank of society, of a male with two wives, but are informed that for one woman to have two husbands is a

[1] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 303 *sq.*; Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 207 *sq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 287; Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 163 *sq.*; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 150; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 12-14; Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 338; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 280-282.

[3] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 163.

universal habit. Some favourite in the father's household or retinue at an early period becomes the husband of the daughter, who still remains under the paternal roof till contracted in marriage to a second individual, on which she removes with her first husband to his habitation, and both herself and original companion are supported by him."[1] Melville describes the custom in substantially the same way, and adds, "No man has more than one wife, and no wife of mature years has less than two husbands,—sometimes she has three, but such instances are not frequent." He seems to have attributed the practice to a scarcity of women; for he tells us that "the males considerably outnumber the females."[2] The same view was taken at a later date by Dr. Clavel, who observes: "In the islands where the women are in a minority we may to this day observe tolerably numerous cases of polyandry. Thus at Ua-Una I met some women who had each two husbands, almost always one of them young and the other old. Such households of three are not worse than the rest and never give rise to intestine dissensions."[3] According to Radiguet, the right of having more husbands than one was not general and hardly belonged to any but chieftainesses,[4] but this limitation is denied by a good authority.[5] The Russian navigator Lisiansky, who visited the Marquesas in 1804, seems to have supposed that the custom was restricted to wealthy families. He says: "In rich families, every woman has two husbands; of whom one may be called the assistant husband. This last, when the other is at home, is nothing more than the head servant of the house; but, in case of absence, exercises all the rights of matrimony, and is also obliged to attend his lady wherever she goes. It happens sometimes, that the subordinate partner is chosen after marriage; but in general two men present themselves to the same woman, who, if she approves their addresses, appoints one for the real husband, and the other as his auxiliary: the auxiliary is generally poor, but handsome and well-made."[6]

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 317.
[2] Melville, *Typee*, pp. 203 *sq.*
[3] Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 60.
[4] Radiguet, *op. cit.* 173.
[5] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 111.
[6] Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 83. As to polyandry in the Marquesas, see further E. Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, Fifth Edition (London, 1921), iii. 146 *sqq.*

Another peculiar habit of the Marquesans was to give away their children to be adopted by other people soon after their birth. When a woman was pregnant, she and her husband would discuss to whom they should give the child that was about to be born. They received offers from neighbours, and often knocked down the infant to the highest bidder; for the adopting parents regularly made presents to the child's family, consisting of cloth, tools, and pigs, according to the fortune of the contracting parties. After birth the child remained with its mother for some months till it was weaned, upon which it was sent away to its parents by adoption, who might inhabit a different district and even a different island. It is said to have been exceptional for parents to bring up their own offspring.[1]

Another mode by which the Marquesans created artificial relationships was the exchange of names. Such an exchange was equivalent to a ratification of amity and good-will between the persons, who thereby acquired a claim to mutual protection and the enjoyment of each other's property and even of their wives, if they happened to be married men. The custom was not limited to the natives; they readily exchanged names with Europeans and granted them the privileges which flowed from the pact. It is even said that some natives gave their own names to animals, which thenceforth became sacred for them and for the rest of the tribe. This led to so many inconveniences that the priests had to forbid the practice of exchanging names with animals.[2]

§ 5. *Amusements, Dancing-places, Banqueting-halls*

A favourite amusement of the islanders was racing or combating on stilts. A stilt was composed of two pieces, a pole of light wood which the runner held in his hand, and a step or foot-rest of hard wood, on which he planted one of his feet. The step or foot-rest was often adorned with human figures curiously carved, which are said to have represented gods. The races or combats took place on the

[1] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 19 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 56, 61 *sq.*

[2] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 16 *sq.*, 158 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 61 *sq.*

paved areas which were to be seen in most villages, and which formed the scene of public entertainments. In these contests each runner or combatant tried to get in the way of his adversary, and, balancing himself on one stilt, to strike his rival with the other, so as to bring him to the ground amid the laughter and jeers of the spectators. It has sometimes been supposed that the use of stilts in the Marquesas originated in the practical purpose of enabling people to cross a stream without wetting their feet. But the supposition is highly improbable. For, on the one hand, the streams in the islands are mere rivulets, which dry up for the greater part of the year; and, on the other hand, the natives are almost amphibious, often spending whole days in the water, and swimming for hours without fatigue. Hence it is absurd to imagine that they invented stilts simply to keep their feet dry at crossing a shallow stream.[1]

But perhaps the most popular recreation of the Marquesans was dancing and singing, which formed a leading feature of their festivals. Every inhabited district had its dancing-place, a sort of public square, where places were set apart for the use of the performers, the musicians, and the spectators. These have been described by the missionary, C. S. Stewart, from personal observation. He says, "Our walk terminated at what may be called the *theatre* or *opera house* of the settlement, a large rectangular platform of stone pavement, surrounded by low terraces also laid with stone; the first designed for the public exhibitions of the song and the dance, and the last for the accommodation of the spectators who assemble to witness the performance. Entertainments of this kind are the most fashionable and favourite amusements at the Washington and the Marquesan groups. Every inhabited district has its *Tahua*, or public square of this kind; some of them so extensive, it is said, as to be capable of accommodating ten thousand people."[2] Again, speaking of another of these

[1] Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 119 *sq.*, 124; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 146; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 124-126; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 284; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 96. As for the ability of the natives to swim in the sea for hours without fatigue, compare J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 129.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 214 *sq.*

dancing-places, the same writer observes, "This *Tahua*, or theatre, is a structure altogether superior to that visited by us yesterday, and so massive and well built as to be capable of enduring for ages. It is a regular oblong square, about sixty feet in length and forty broad. The outer wall consists of immense stones, or slabs of rock, three feet high, and many of them four or six feet long, joined closely together and hewn with a regularity and neatness truly astonishing, in view of the rude implements by which it must have been accomplished. On a level with the top of this outer wall, a pavement of large flat stones, several feet in width, extends entirely round, forming seats for the chiefs, warriors, and other persons of distinction, and singers performing the recitatives and choruses accompanying the dance. Within this, and some inches lower, is another pavement still wider, having large flat-topped stones fixed in it at regular intervals of six or eight feet, used as seats by the beaters on the drums, and other rude instruments of music, and immediately within this again, an unpaved area, some twenty feet long by twelve broad, constituting the stage on which the dancers exhibit their skill."[1]

Some of these dancing-places appear to have been much larger than those seen by Stewart. According to Langsdorff they were sometimes not less than a hundred fathoms in length, and the great smooth pavement consisted of blocks of stone, several feet broad, laid so neatly and so close together that you might have imagined it to be the work of European master-masons.[2] Radiguet describes one such dancing-place as a rectangular area eighty metres (about two hundred and sixty feet) long by thirty metres (about one hundred feet) broad, and surrounded by a terrace paved with stone, on which the spectators were seated.[3]

The festivals (*koikas*) celebrated at these places were either periodical or occasional. Among the periodical perhaps the most important was that held at the ingathering of the bread-fruit harvest in February and March. Among the occasional were those held after a successful

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 233 *sq.* Compare Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp 265 *sq.*

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 138.

[3] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 195.

fishing, at the ratification of peace, and after the death of a priest or chief, who had been raised to the rank of a deity. A messenger decked in all the native finery repaired to the surrounding villages inviting the inhabitants to attend the festival. Immense numbers of hogs were killed and huge troughs filled with bread-fruit were provided by the hosts for the banquet. The festivals were attended not only by the people of the particular valley in which they were held, but by the inhabitants of other valleys and even of other islands; for so long as a festival lasted, a special taboo forbade the natives to harm the strangers in their midst. A general truce was observed; members of hostile tribes came to share the pleasures of the festival with the foes whom they had recently fought, and whom they would fight again in a few days.[1] Yet such visitors were careful to observe certain precautions: they never came unarmed, and they always kept together on one side of the festival ground, in order that they might rally the more easily for mutual defence, if they should be suddenly attacked.[2]

The performers who sang and danced at these festivals for the entertainment of the public were called *Hokis* or *Kaioas*: they are described as a sort of wandering troubadours or minstrels, who went from tribe to tribe, seeking their fortune. They took great care of their persons, which they artificially whitened. At once poets, musicians, and dancers, they nevertheless did not enjoy the public esteem; on the contrary, their effeminate habits incurred the contempt of a people who had small taste for the fine arts.[3] Thus these wandering minstrels and mountebanks would seem to have corresponded to the Areois of the Society Islands.[4] The dances were accompanied by the beating of drums and the songs of a chorus, it might be of a hundred and fifty singers, who sat on the upper platform along with the chiefs and warriors. Sometimes in the intervals between the dances a choir of women, seated on

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 236 *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 318; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 264 *sq.*; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 69 *sqq.*; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 192 *sq.*

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 138.

[3] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 231. Compare C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 237, who calls the performers *Kaioi*.

[4] See above, pp. 259 *sqq.*

an adjoining and elevated platform, would chant in dull monotonous tones, clapping their hands loudly in unison with their song. The subjects of the songs were various and were often furnished by some passing event, such as the arrival of a ship or any less novel incident. Not unfrequently, like ballads in our own country, the songs caught the popular fancy and became fashionable, being sung in private by all classes of society. So passionately addicted were the Marquesans to these entertainments that they undertook the longest and most fatiguing journeys from all parts of the island in order to be present at them, carrying their food and suffering great hardships by the way; they even came in their crazy canoes, at the hazard of their lives, from other islands, and accepted the risk of being knocked on the head at one of the brawls with which such gatherings usually ended.[1]

Closely connected with the festivals were the banqueting-halls, as they may be called. These were houses, or rather sheds, thatched with leaves and open in front, where the lower end of the sloping roof was supported on short wooden pillars, of which the upper parts were rudely carved in the likeness of the god Tiki, thus forming a sort of Caryatids. These sheds varied in length from thirty to sixty and even two hundred feet in length. They stood on quadrangular stone platforms of the usual type, ranging from three or four to six, eight, twelve, and even fifteen feet in height. The blocks of stone put together to form the platforms were sometimes enormous, many of them measuring eight feet long by four feet thick and wide; and they were hewn and polished into such perfect form as to excite the wonder of the European beholder, who reflected with astonishment on the vast labour requisite to bring these huge rocks from the sea and to chisel them into shape without the help of iron tools. Access to the platforms was afforded by sloping trunks of trees notched into steps. In these open sheds the men feasted and prayed. Before each repast it was customary to offer to the deity a small portion of food wrapt in leaves. Sometimes the priests would thrust the morsels into the mouths of Tiki's grotesque

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 234, 236, 237.

images. No woman might enter these banqueting-halls or mount the platforms on which they stood. The place was strictly tabooed to them, and the taboo was signified in the usual way by long pennants of white cloth attached to the posts of the house.[1]

§ 6. *Social Ranks, Taboo*

Socially the Marquesans were divided into chiefs or nobles and commoners; but the chiefs seem to have possessed very little authority, and to have received few outward marks of deference and respect. A monarchical government in any proper sense of the word was unknown.[2] The power of the chiefs, such as it was, rested mainly on their superior wealth, particularly on their landed property; for the larger their estates, the greater the number of the tenants whose services they could command. Hence the government has been called aristocratic and compared to the feudal system.[3] In a fruitful season the chiefs had a right to a fourth part of the produce, and in other seasons a share according to circumstances. Their dignity was hereditary.[4] There was no general government of the archipelago as a

[1] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 38 *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 317 *sq.*; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 54-56; Melville, *Typee*, pp. 93-95. Of these writers it is Porter who gives the dimensions of some of the blocks of stone composing the platforms and expresses his amazement at the labour involved in their construction. He concludes his description as follows (ii. 39): "When we count the immense numbers of such places, which are everywhere to be met with, our astonishment is raised to the highest, that a people in a state of nature, unassisted by any of those artificial means, which so much assist and facilitate the labour of the civilized man, could have conceived and executed a work, which, to every beholder, must appear stupendous. These piles are raised with views to magnificence alone; there does not appear to be the slightest utility attending them: the houses situated on them are unoccupied, except during the period of feasting, and they appear to belong to a public, without the whole efforts of which they could not have been raised, and with every exertion that could possibly have been made, years must have been requisite for the completion of them." Of one of these structures seen by him in the anterior of Nukahiva, Stewart observes, "The stones, bearing marks of antiquity that threw the air of an old family mansion around the whole, were regularly hewn and joined with the greatest nicety, many which I measured being from four to six feet in length, nearly as wide, and two or more deep" (*Visit to the South Seas*, i. 267 *sq.*).

[2] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 165; Langsdorff, i. 112 *sq.*; Fleurieu, *op. cit.* i. 132-134; Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 64; Melville, *Typee*, p. 199; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 225; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 24 *sq.*

[3] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* 101 *sq.*

[4] Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 80.

whole. Each island was quite independent of all the rest; and in every island there were several independent tribes, which were generally at war with each other.[1]

A powerful instrument in the hands of the nobles was the taboo or *tapu*, which, though it seems to have been originally a religious institution,[2] was turned to political and economic account by the chiefs and priests acting in conjunction. One of our best authorities on the Marquesans describes the institution as a tool of despotism for the gratification of the passions and caprices of such as could wield it.[3] But this is a somewhat one-sided and imperfect view to take of its scope. There is no doubt, as other good authorities on the Marquesans have pointed out, that in the absence of a strong government which could maintain order and protect life and property, the taboo to a great extent served the purposes which in more civilised society are fulfilled by laws.[4] The taboo was a sacred interdiction, a breach of which was believed of itself to entail disastrous consequences on the transgressor. The interdiction might be either public or private. To give examples of public interdictions, when the quantity of bread-fruit, on which the people depended for their subsistence, was from any cause seriously diminished in a district, the chief had the right to impose a taboo on bread-fruit trees for twenty months, during which no one might gather the fruit. This close time allowed the trees to recover their strength and fertility. Similarly, if fish were scarce, the chief might pronounce a taboo on the neighbouring bay, or a part of it, in order to allow the fish to multiply undisturbed and replenish the sea in the neighbourhood of human habitations. Again, in the prospect of a great festival, a chief might lay an interdict on pigs for two or three years in advance, in order that, when the time came, there might be plenty of pork for the multitude at the banquet. Similarly, when the paper-mulberry, from which the Marquesans made their bark-cloth, threatened to give out,

[1] Lisiansky, *op. cit.* pp. 79 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 62.

[2] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 47 *sq.*; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 259.

[3] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 153.

[4] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 258 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 65 *sq.*

the chief might lay the trees under an interdict for five years, at the end of which the crop was sure to be magnificent.[1] In these and similar cases the taboo was of public utility by ensuring a proper supply of the necessaries of life. However, its imposition was not always guided by rational considerations, and hence it sometimes failed of its purpose. For example, so long as the bread-fruit was unripe, almost all kinds of fish were taboo and therefore might not be eaten, and this interdiction, instead of alleviating, tended naturally to aggravate the scarcity of food. The reason for the taboo was a curious superstition that if any one were to eat fish while the bread-fruit was unripe, the fruit would fall from the trees.[2]

But the taboo also served a useful purpose by ensuring respect for private property, which is a fundamental condition of social prosperity. "The priests only," we are told, "can impose a general taboo, but every individual has a right to pronounce one upon his own property: this is done by declaring, if his wish be to preserve a breadfruit, or a cocoa tree, a house or a plantation, from robbery and destruction, that the spirit of his father or of some king, or indeed of any other person, reposes in this tree, or house, which then bears the name of the person, and nobody ventures to attack it. If any one is so irreligious as to break through a taboo, and should be convicted of it, he is called *kikino*; and the *kikinos* are always the first to be devoured by the enemy, at least they believe it to be so, nor is it impossible that the priests should so arrange matters as that this really happens."[3] Again, if a man's pig had been stolen, and he suspected who had done the deed, he would lay a taboo on the swine or other property of the thief by giving his own name, or the name of somebody else, to the animals or the trees or whatever it might be. After that, in the opinion of the people, the property so named was bewitched or haunted by the spirit of the person, whether alive or dead, whose name it bore; and this belief sometimes sufficed to compel the thief to abandon his possessions and to settle

[1] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 35 *sq.* Compare Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 155.

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 118.

[3] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 172. In this quotation I have altered the spelling *tahbu* into *taboo*.

elsewhere.[1] A wreath of leaves or a strip of white cloth attached to a house, a canoe, a fruit-tree, or other piece of property, was the symbol of taboo, and in ordinary circumstances was enough to protect it.[2]

But the taboo was an instrument which could be used capriciously to thwart, as well as to further, the course of justice. Thus we read how, under the French government of the islands, a wife set out for the police-office to complain of the ill-treatment to which she had been subjected by her husband. But scarcely had she put her foot outside the door, when her husband, aware of her intention and determined to frustrate it, called out after her, "The road from here to the police-office is your father." On hearing that, the woman at once stopped short, for under no circumstances would she dare to trample on the author of her being. On the contrary, she immediately roasted two little pigs and carried them to the tomb of her father as an offering to appease his ghost, which might reasonably be supposed to fret at the mere thought of being trodden under foot by his own daughter.[3] This instructive example shows how closely the taboo was associated with the fear and worship of the dead; by bestowing the name of a dead person on a thing you rendered the thing inviolate, since thereby you placed it under the immediate protection of the ghost.

Among the multitude of taboos which were religiously observed by the Marquesans it is perhaps possible to detect a trace of totemism. Thus the sting ray fish was taboo to the tribe of Houmis. Not only would they not eat the fish, but they fled in horror if it were even shown to them. Their horror was explained by a tradition that once on a time a great chief of the tribe had been out fishing with his people, when a gigantic sting ray upset their canoes and gobbled them all up.[4] This aversion to eating and even looking at a certain species of animal, together with a traditionary explanation based on an incident in the past history of the tribe, is very characteristic of totemism.

[1] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 116.

[2] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 157; Melville, *Typee*, p. 230; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 264.

[3] Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 68.

[4] Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 67 *sq.*

§ 7. *Religion and Mythology*

The consideration of taboo introduces us to the subject of religion; for, on the one hand, the foregoing evidence tends to establish a connexion between the institution of taboo and the doctrine of the human soul, and on the other hand some of our best authorities on the Marquesans have stated that the taboo was believed to be an expression of the will of the gods conveyed to the people through the mouth of a priest.[1] The definition may be accepted, if under gods we include the spirits of the dead, who were worshipped by the Marquesans and lent their sanction, as we have just seen, to the taboo.

The Marquesan term for a god was the usual Polynesian word *atua* or, as it is sometimes spelled, *etua*. But their notion of divinity, as commonly happens, was vague. One of the earliest writers on their religion, the Russian navigator Krusenstern, informs us that "a confused notion of a higher being, whom they call *Etua*, does indeed exist among them, but of these there are several kinds; the spirit of a priest, of a king, or of any of his relations, being an *etua*. They likewise consider all Europeans as such; for as their ideas do not extend beyond their own horizon, they are firmly convinced that their ships come from the clouds; and they imagine that thunder is occasioned by the cannonading of vessels which float in the atmosphere, on which account they entertain a great dread of artillery."[2] The *atuas* or deities of the Marquesans, we are told by another writer, "are numerous and vary in their character and powers. Besides those having dominion respectively, as is supposed, over the different elements and their most striking phenomena, there are *atuas* of the mountain and of the forest, of the sea-side and of the interior, *atuas* of peace and of war, of the song and of the dance, and of all the occupations and amusements of life. It is supposed by them that many of the departed spirits of

[1] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 258; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 48; Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 153; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 65.

[2] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 171.

men also become *atuas*: and thus the multiplicity of their gods is such, that almost every sound in nature, from the roaring of the tempest in the mountains and the bursting of a thunderbolt in the clouds, to the sighing of a breeze through the cocoa-nut tops and the chirping of an insect in the grass or in the thatch of their huts, is interpreted into the movements of a god."[1]

But the Marquesans, not content with deifying some men after death, deified others in their lifetime. Amongst them there is, or rather used to be, a class of living men "who claim the title and attributes of the Deity; not through a professed inspiration or possession by a supernatural influence or power, but in their own right of godship as those who control the elements, impart fruitfulness to the productions of the earth or smite them with blasting and sterility, and who exercise the prerogatives of the Deity in scattering disease and wielding the shafts of death. They are few in number, not more than one or two at farthest on an island, and live in a seclusion and mysticism somewhat in unison with their blasphemous pretensions. There is none at present in the near vicinity of Taiohae,[2] though the former abode of such an individual is pointed out at the foot of a bold cliff, high in the mountains. The Rev. Mr. Crook gives the following account of an Atua, at the island of Tahuata, in the Windward or Marquesan group, while he resided there temporarily in 1797, as a missionary from the London Missionary Society: 'He is now of great age, and has lived from early life at Hanateiteina, in a large house surrounded by an enclosure called the A. In the house is an altar, and from the beams within and upon the trees around it are human carcasses, suspended with their heads downward and scalped. No one enters the premises but his servant, except when human sacrifices are offered. Of these, more are offered to him than to any other of their gods, and he frequently seats himself on an elevated scaffold in front of his house and calls for two or three at a time. He is invoked in all parts of the island, and offerings everywhere are made

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 243 *sq.* Compare Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 240; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 218 *sq.*

[2] The principal harbour of Nukahiva.

to him and sent to Hanateiteina.'"[1] Similarly a Catholic missionary tells us that in the island of Nukahiva he was personally acquainted with two living human deities, a priest and a priestess, both of whom, it was said, had the right to demand the sacrifice of human victims to themselves. He adds, however, that they did not abuse the right, and that nobody in the world appeared more affable and polite than these divinities; he even entertained hopes of one day baptizing the priest.[2] Of the reverence in which the priestly class in general was held by the people, Captain Porter remarks that "their priests are their oracles; they are considered but little inferior to their gods; to some they are greatly superior, and after their death they rank with the chief divinity."[3]

Little seems to be recorded of the theology and mythology of the Marquesans; but among their myths was the widespread Polynesian story of the origin of fire. Of old, it was said, fire used to be jealously guarded by Mahoike in the infernal regions. Hearing of its utility, Maui descended into the nether world to steal some of the element; but he failed to elude the vigilance of its guardian and was obliged to resort to force to extort the boon from him. In the struggle which ensued Mahoike lost an arm and a leg, and to save his remaining limbs he consented to give fire to the victorious Maui. At the same time he offered to rub it on Maui's leg; but Maui was too cunning to agree to that, for he knew that in that case the fire which he took to earth would not be sacred. Finally, Mahoike rubbed the fire on Maui's head, and said to him, "Go back to the place you came from and touch with your forehead all the trees except the *keïka*: all the trees will yield you fire."[4]

In the Marquesas there was a class of men called *tauas*,

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 244 *sq.* Compare Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 226, 240 *sq.* The missionary William Crook was landed in the Marquesas from the missionary ship *Duff* in 1797. See J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, pp. 131 *sqq.*

[2] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 45.

[3] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 114.

[4] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 223 *sq.* For the names of the Marquesan deities, among whom Tiki appears to have been the most famous, and for some myths concerning them, see Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 40 *sqq.*; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 221 *sqq.*; Amable, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xix. (1847) pp. 23 *sq.*; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 27 *sqq.*

who were supposed to possess an hereditary gift of inspiration and to become deities after their death. They could cause a god to dwell within them. Often at night they might be heard conversing with the divinity in their bodies, the deity crying out in a shrill voice, while the man answered him in his own ordinary voice. Sometimes they would make a rustling noise with their fingers in the leaves, and say that they had been miraculously taken through the thatch of the house and brought back again by the door. In their fits of inspiration they became convulsed and glared fiercely with their eyes; then, with their hands quivering violently, they would run about, while they prophesied death to their enemies in squeaky tones, or demanded human victims for the god by whom they were possessed. With the function of prophecy they combined the office of physician or rather of exorciser. For every internal disorder was believed to be inflicted by some god, who had taken possession of the sufferer's person; and the *tauas*, or high priests, as we may call them, were called in to heal the patient by ridding him of the divinity who had entered into him. This they commonly did by feeling for the mischievous deity till they found him, when they smothered him between the palms of their hands.[1] Sometimes the good physician would converse with the spirit whom he had thus caught between his hands, and would elicit from him in conversation the cause of the sickness, which usually consisted in some breach of taboo, such as a theft of bread-fruit or coco-nuts from a sacred tree. At the same time the affable spirit would reveal to the physician the penalty which the sick man must pay in order to expiate his crime and thereby ensure his recovery. A sacrifice of pigs would appear to have been usually deemed indispensable for the patient's complete convalescence; the animals were conveyed to a temple and there consumed by the priests for the benefit of the sufferer.[2] The *tauas* or high priests were supposed to become gods after death; when one of them departed this life, it was essential for his deification that human victims should be

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 245 *sq.*; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 227 *sq.*

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 136. The writer's language seems to imply that the spirit whom the priestly physician caught in his hands and interrogated was the patient's own soul.

sacrificed. The number of victims varied with the rank of the new deity; it was never less than seven, but oftener ten. Each victim was sacrificed for the sake of a particular part of the deity's body, as for his head, or his eyes, or his hair. To procure the necessary tale of victims, predatory expeditions were undertaken against the tribes in neighbouring valleys.[1]

§ 8. *The Soul, Death, and Funeral Customs*

Like most savages, the Marquesans thought that they possessed souls which could quit their bodies and wander far away in dreams. Thus a young girl once related how, the night before, she had sailed in a splendid canoe to Tiburones, a mythical paradise to the west of Nukahiva; there she had seen beautiful things such as do not exist here on earth. "There," said she, "the trees are very tall, and the people very handsome; there they sing songs to music sweeter than ours. Ah! when shall I be able to return to Tiburones?" On another occasion a woman's soul appeared to a priest to inform him that she had committed the heinous crime of eating a fowl, but that she would expiate the sacrilege by an early death. The French authorities summoned both the priest and the woman to the bar of justice. There the priest stuck to it that he had received the revelation, and the woman expressed her regret for the escapade of which her soul had been guilty without her knowledge. It was necessary to reassure her on the subject of her soul's rash act and melancholy prediction, otherwise she might have fulfilled the prophecy by refusing food and dying outright.[2]

At death the soul was supposed to depart from the body by the mouth or the nose; hence in order to delay its departure and so to prolong the life of its owner, affectionate relatives used to stop his mouth and nostrils, thus accelerating the event which they wished to retard.[3]

The Marquesans have, or used to have, a sovereign

[1] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 45; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 247; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 228 *sq.*

[2] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 238 *sq.*

[3] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 245; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 44, note 1. Compare Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 115.

contempt for death, and do not fear its approach. When a native felt that he must die, he took it calmly and ordered his coffin, which he caused to be brought to the house while he was still in life. The coffin is hollowed out of a single log and resembles a canoe. If the sick man after all recovered, the coffin was kept in a corner of the house till it was wanted. No attempt was made to hide it or to disguise its purpose. Should a stranger ask, "What is that?" he would be told, "It is So-and-so's coffin"; though So-and-so might be present and within hearing.[1] Nevertheless, when it was clear that a serious illness was about to terminate fatally, and that all the efforts of the priestly physician or sorcerer to avert the inevitable end were fruitless, the house would be filled by wailing women, who danced naked round the mat of the dying man, cutting themselves with sharp stones or shark's teeth as in a frenzy, and uttering the most piercing lamentations. This lasted till the moment of death, when all united in a terrific and prolonged howl.[2] Similar demonstrations of sorrow were continued or renewed after the decease. If the departed was a married man and his widow survived him, she would bruise her flesh with a stone, scratch it with her nails, and cut her forehead, cheeks, and breast with shark's teeth or splinters of bamboo till the blood trickled down.[3] Captain Porter saw a woman with deep wounds still unhealed, which she had inflicted on her neck, breast, and arms for the loss of her husband, who had been devoured by a shark.[4] After the death, too, the widow would place herself in front of the corpse, and three or four girls would surround her; whereupon they would all engage in a lascivious dance, with outstretched arms, tripping in cadence to the accompaniment of a funeral hymn or lamentation, which was chanted by a choir in honour of the dead. After executing the dance, which would seem to have been intended to attract the attention of the deceased and recall his wandering spirit, they would stoop over the corpse, and

[1] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 114 *sq.*; Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* p. 58. Compare Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 260 *sqq.*

[2] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 263; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 249 *sq.*

[3] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 284; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 39.

[4] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 121.

cry, "He has not stirred! He stirs not. Alas! alas! he is no more." It was only after they had thus practised their seductions in vain on the dead man that the widow gave way to her frantic outburst of sorrow by mauling herself with a sort of saw.[1] This funeral dance a widow was apparently expected to renew in public at every festival for months after the death. At a festival, which he called the Feast of Calabashes, Melville saw four or five old women, stark naked, holding themselves erect and leaping stiffly into the air, with their arms pressed close to their sides, like sticks bobbing up and down in water. They preserved the utmost gravity of countenance, and continued their strange movements without a single moment's cessation, though they did not appear to attract the observation of the crowd around them. The American was told that these dancing or leaping figures "were bereaved widows, whose partners had been slain in battle many moons previously; and who, at every festival, gave public evidence in this manner of their calamities."[2] When the deceased was a chief, the lamentations and the dances went on day and night for some time. A priestess or sorceress, in festal costume, led the choir of female mourners and vaunted the exploits of the dead warrior, recalling his mighty deeds and the incidents of his life. The dances were accompanied by the music of drums. The crowd of spectators, in their best array, ate and drank to repletion, and, flushed with liquor, abandoned themselves to excesses which transformed the mortuary chamber, lit up at night by smoky torches, into a scene of low debauchery. From time to time remarks of a gross nature were addressed to the dead man on the helpless condition to which he was reduced; and now and then the women would slash their faces and breasts with splinters of bamboo in the usual fashion. The orgy went on till the provisions were completely exhausted, which might not be for a considerable time, since hecatombs of pigs were sometimes slaughtered for the purpose of

[1] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 283 *sq.* Another writer mentions that at the moment of death it was customary for a number of matrons to strip themselves naked and execute obscene dances at the door of the house, crying out at the pitch of their voices, "Father! father!" See Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 116.

[2] Melville, *Typee*, pp. 180, 201.

celebrating the obsequies of a chief in a manner worthy of his rank.[1]

The soul of the dead was believed not to abandon the corpse definitely for two days after the death. In the interval it was thought to haunt the house, watching the conduct of the survivors, and ready to act as a friend or a foe according as the mourners behaved towards the deceased and his remains. Hence, to keep the ghost in good humour it was customary to offer him food, in the shape of bread-fruit paste and other dainties, which were wrapped up in leaves, hung on the edge of the coffin, and frequently renewed.[2] On the third night after the death a priest, stepping out on the terrace in front of the house, implored the wandering soul of the deceased to depart; and by way of enforcing the request a band of men, armed with spears and other lethal weapons, went about in the outer darkness, beating the bushes and stabbing the thatched roofs of the houses in order to drive the lingering ghost away. If, roused by the clamour, the dogs began to bark, the priest would say, "The soul is departing."[3]

From the moment of death till the priests had completed the litany or songs chanted on such occasions, all the assembled people fasted, no one touched the provisions collected for the funeral feast, and no fire might be kindled within sight of the house.[4] The litany consisted in the mumbling of a long speech in an unintelligible language accompanied by the constant beating of drums.[5] Among the victuals provided for the funeral feast special importance appears to have been attached to the head of a pig, which was cut off and attached to the bier.[6] We are told that the professed intention was thereby "to propitiate the gods, and obtain for the deceased a safe and peaceable passage through the lower regions." But, in point of fact the priest took possession of the pig's head and devoured it secretly, leaving only a small piece of it under a stone.[7]

[1] Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 43 *sq.*

[2] Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 46.

[3] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 284 *sq.*

[4] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 265; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 251.

[5] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 133.

[6] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 285.

[7] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 173. Compare Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 133; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 265; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 251.

When death had taken place, the body was washed, neatly dressed in garments of new cloth, and laid on a bier constructed of bamboos or of spears and other warlike weapons, fastened together with wicker-work and spread with mats.[1] If the deceased was a chief and a warrior, his body would be arrayed in his finest ornaments, and his club, plumed helmet, necklaces of whale's teeth, and skulls of the enemies he had killed, would be laid beside him. Thus exposed, the corpse might be kept for weeks in the house, where, in spite of the stench, the family continued to eat, drink, and sleep beside it. Sometimes, however, and perhaps more usually, the body was transferred to a small house or shed adjoining the dwelling of the deceased, where it received the necessary attentions. Finally, it was removed to a little hut or shed, where the bier was supported on posts under a thatched roof. To be buried in the earth was a mark of ignominy reserved at most for a young girl of the lowest rank who had died childless. Beside the corpse food was hung for the use of the ghost, it might be fish, roast pork, or coco-nuts, and there it was allowed to remain till it rotted and fell to the ground; none but children would be greedy or impious enough to partake of the sacred victuals, and that only in the greatest secrecy. Often the house in which the death had taken place was tabooed and abandoned after the remains had been deposited in their last home.[2]

The bodies of the dead were regularly subjected to a kind of embalmment, which had the effect of preserving them for a longer or shorter time. As soon as decomposition appeared imminent, the corpse was stripped of its ornaments and placed in the usual canoe-shaped coffin, the trunk being propped up so as to facilitate the work of the embalmers. The task of embalming was entrusted to women, relations of

[1] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 172 *sq.*; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 133; Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 81; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 264.

[2] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 116 *sq.* As to the decoration of the corpse, see Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 43 *sq.* As to the temporary house or shed in which the body was kept for some time after death, compare C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 264, 266; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 250. As for the custom of keeping the body for months in the ordinary house, surrounded by the family, see Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 286. As to the practice of hanging food beside the body, even after its removal to its last place of rest, see J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au Pole Sud et dans l'Océanie, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1842), p. 33; Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 46.

the deceased, who rubbed the body daily with coco-nut oil and perfumes. They had no intercourse with the rest of the family, and took their meals apart without ever washing their hands. According to one account, the anointment was performed by night, while during the day the body was exposed to the sun on the stone platform of the house. The products of decomposition were carefully received in vessels and carried away to the place of sepulture; and the corpse was gradually eviscerated through the rectum. The friction was continued until the desiccated body was reduced to the state of a mummy, though sometimes, in spite of all precautions, it crumbled into dust. If the operation was successful, the mummy, wrapt in many bandages, was covered by a second canoe attached to the first, and was then placed on a scaffold in a *morai* or sanctuary specially consecrated to it. But sometimes the mummy was fastened up to the roof or wall of the house wherein the person had died; and it might be kept there even for years. When it was deposited in a *morai*, no woman was allowed to approach it under pain of death.[1] Sometimes the head was detached from the body and kept in the house, where it was treated with respect. Sometimes it was carried away and hidden in some almost inaccessible cave in the mountains or beside the sea. This was done as a precaution to save the skulls from falling into the hands of enemies, who were eager to bear them off as trophies.[2]

Each family had its own *morai* or burial-place, where the mouldering bones or mummies were finally deposited and left to decay.[3] Such family cemeteries were scattered about

[1] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 173; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 133 *sq.*; Melville, *Typee*, p. 206; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 286 *sq.*; Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 44 *sq.* In a house in Nukahiva the missionary Stewart saw a canoe-shaped coffin containing the remains of a man who had died many years before. It was raised on a bier of framework, at a height of two or three feet above the ground. Stewart adds, "The dead bodies of all persons of high distinction are preserved in their houses for a long period in this way." See C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 259.

[2] Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 45 *sq.*; Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 233 *sq.*

[3] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 127, 173; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 115, 134. Other writers on the Marquesas in like manner speak of a *morai* simply as a place of burial. See Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 114 ("the gods at the burying-place, or morai, for so it is called by them"); Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 52 ("un *morai* (sépulchre) en ruine"); Melville, *Typee*, p. 168 ("the 'morais' or burying-grounds"). So, too, the term was understood by the French navigator, J. Dumont d'Urville. See his *Voyage au Pole Sud, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1842), pp. 27, 33.

the valleys; the choice of a site seems to have been determined by no special rule.[1] The *morai* or burial-place of ordinary people was near their houses, and not far from it was a taboo-house, where the men feasted on the flesh of pigs.[2] But the cemeteries of chiefs were situated in the interior of the valleys, often so deeply imbedded in dense foliage that it was not easy to find them without the guidance of a native.[3] Similarly we are told that the cemeteries (*morais*) of priests lay quite apart from all dwellings.[4]

The ordinary form of a Marquesan *morai* or burial-place seems to have been a thatched shed erected on a square or oblong platform of stones, exactly resembling the stone platforms on which the Marquesan houses were regularly built. Thus Vincendon-Dumoulin and Desgraz say that "the *morais*, funeral monuments where the bodies are deposited, are erected on a stone platform, the base of all Nukahivan edifices."[5] Again, describing what he calls "a picturesque *morai*," Radiguet observes, "Four posts, erected on a platform, supported a small plank covered with a roof of leaves. Under this roof could be seen the remains of a skeleton, perhaps that of the daughter-in-law of the neighbouring house. . . . At the two ends of the platform two upright stones, about ten feet high, and resembling the Breton *menhirs*, formed an exceptional ornament to this *morai*, which the bushes were in course of invading and the storms of demolishing."[6] Again, Stewart describes as follows what he calls "a depository of the dead": "It stands in the midst of a beautiful clump of trees, and consists of a platform of heavy stone work, twenty feet or more square and four or five high, surmounted in the centre by eight or ten posts arranged in the shape of a grave, and supporting at a height of six or seven feet a long and narrow roof of thatch. Close

[1] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 253.

[2] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 115. According to Krusenstern (*op. cit.* i. 127), the *morais* in general "lie a good way inland upon hills."

[3] F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage*, i. 329.

[4] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 115.

[5] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 253.

[6] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 92. One of these stones was said to have been erected by the French navigator, Captain Marchand, and to have formerly borne an inscription recording his taking possession of the island. Hence it would be unsafe to draw any conclusion from the supposed antiquity of these two tall upright stones.

beneath this was the body enclosed in a coffin." [1] Again, in the island of Tahuata (Santa Christina), Bennett describes a chief's burial-place as follows: "A low but extensive stone platform, beneath the shade of a venerable *fau*-tree, marks the more consecrated ground; and on this is erected a wooden hut, containing an elevated trough, shaped as a canoe, and holding the perfect skeleton of the late chief. In front of the sepulchre are two hideous wooden idols, and several bundles of coco-nut leaves." [2] The shed, which was erected on the stone platform, and under which the body rested on a bier, seems to have consisted for the most part simply of a thatched roof supported on wooden posts.[3] Sometimes, however, instead of a simple shed, open on all sides, a small house resembling the ordinary houses of the natives appears to have been erected for the reception of the corpse or mummy. Thus in the island of Tahuata (Santa Christina) Bennett describes a burial-place as follows: "The most picturesque mausoleum we noticed was that which contained the corpse of one of Eutiti's children. It was placed on the summit of an isolated hill, rising from the bosom of a well-wooded savannah, and was covered entirely with the leaves of the fan-palm. The posterior, or tallest wall, was twelve feet high, the anterior was low, closed by a mat, and decorated with six wooden pillars, covered with stained cinnet and white cloth. Strips of tapa [bark-cloth], fixed to a wand, fluttered on the roof, to denote that the spot was tabooed; and for the same purpose, a row of globular stones, each the size of a football, and whitened with coral lime, occupied the top of a low but broad stone wall which encircled the building. The interior contained nothing but the bier on which the corpse was laid." [4] From the sketch which Bennett gives of this particular mausoleum, as he calls it, we gather that the sepulchral hut containing the body was not raised on a stone platform, but built on the flat.

[1] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* i. 260.

[2] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 329.

[3] Compare J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au Pole Sud, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. 33, "Sous un hangar se trouvent quelques supports formant, à 2 mètres au-dessus du sol, une estrade sur laquelle est déposé le *toui-papao*. C'est le nom que les naturels donnent au cadavre enveloppé d'herbes et de *tapa* (étoffes de papyrus faites dans le pays). On n'aperçoit du corps ainsi habillé que les extremités des doigts des pièds et des mains."

[4] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 331.

There seems to be no evidence that the stone platforms on which the sepulchral sheds or huts of the Marquesans were erected ever took the shape of stepped or terraced pyramids like the massive stone pyramids of Tahiti and Tonga. So far as the mortuary platforms of the Marquesans are described, they appear to have been quadrangular piles of stone, with upright sides, not stepped or terraced. Megalithic monuments in the form of stepped or terraced pyramids seem to have been very rare in the Marquesas Islands; indeed, it is doubtful whether they existed at all. With regard to the island of Tahuata (Santa Christina), it is positively affirmed by Bennett that none of the valleys contain "any *morais* or other buildings devoted to religious purposes, nor any public idols";[1] and by *morais* he probably means stepped pyramids like those of Tahiti and Tonga. However, in the valley of Taipii (Typee), in Nukahiva, a megalithic monument, built in terraces, was seen by Melville in 1842. He describes it as follows:

"One day in returning from this spring by a circuitous path, I came upon a scene which reminded me of Stonehenge and the architectural labours of the Druids. At the base of one of the mountains, and surrounded on all sides by dense groves, a series of vast terraces of stone rises, step by step, for a considerable distance up the hillside. These terraces cannot be less than one hundred yards in length and twenty in width. Their magnitude, however, is less striking than the immense size of the blocks composing them. Some of the stones, of an oblong shape, are from ten to fifteen feet in length, and five or six feet thick. Their sides are quite smooth, but though square, and of pretty regular formation, they bear no mark of the chisel. They are laid together without cement, and here and there show gaps between. The topmost terrace and the lower one are somewhat peculiar in their construction. They have both a quadrangular depression in the centre, leaving the rest of the terrace elevated several feet above it. In the intervals of the stones immense trees have taken root, and their broad boughs, stretching far over and interlacing together, support a canopy almost impenetrable to the sun.

[1] F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 322.

Overgrowing the greater part of them, and climbing from one to another, is a wilderness of vines, in whose sinewy embrace many of the stones lie half-hidden, while in some places a thick growth of bushes entirely covers them. There is a wild pathway which obliquely crosses two of these terraces, and so profound is the shade, so dense the vegetation, that a stranger to the place might pass along it without being aware of their existence.

"These structures bear every indication of a very high antiquity, and Kory-Kory, who was my authority in all matters of scientific research, gave me to understand that they were coeval with the creation of the world; that the great gods themselves were the builders; and that they would endure until time shall be no more. Kory-Kory's prompt explanation, and his attributing the work to a divine origin, at once convinced me that neither he nor the rest of his countrymen knew anything about them."[1] Melville was accordingly disposed to attribute the erection of these remarkable terraces to an extinct and forgotten race.[2] The hypothesis is all the more probable because the monument appears to have been entirely abandoned and unused by the natives during the time when they have been known to Europeans. But it is doubtful whether the edifice was a pyramid; all that Melville's somewhat vague description implies is that it consisted of a series of terraces built one above the other on the hillside.

According to some accounts the remains of the dead, instead of being deposited in sheds or huts erected on stone platforms, were buried in the platforms themselves. Thus, according to William Crook, the first missionary to the Marquesans, "they have a *morai* in each district, where the dead are buried beneath a pavement of large stones."[3] Similarly, in Nukahiva two or three large quadrangular platforms (*pi-pis*), heavily flagged, enclosed with regular stone walls and almost hidden by the interlacing branches of enormous trees, were pointed out as burial-places to Melville, and he was told that the bodies "were deposited

[1] Melville, *Typee*, pp. 166 *sq.*
[2] Melville, *Typee*, p. 167.
[3] Quoted by J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*, p. 144.

in rude vaults beneath the flagging, and were suffered to remain there without being disinterred. Although nothing could be more strange and gloomy than the aspect of these places, where the lofty trees threw their dark shadows over rude blocks of stone, a stranger looking at them would have discerned none of the ordinary evidences of a place of sepulture."[1] To the same effect, perhaps, Porter observes that, "when the flesh is mouldered from the bones, they are, as I have been informed, carefully cleansed: some are kept for relics, and some are deposited in the *morais*."[2] Again, Krusenstern says that twelve months after the death "the corpse is broken into pieces, and the bones are packed in a small box made of the wood of the bread-fruit tree, and carried to the *morai* or burial place, where no woman is allowed to approach under pain of death."[3] However, these statements do not necessarily imply that the bones were buried under the stones of the platform at the *morai*.

But whether deposited on biers or buried under the pavement, the remains of the dead were liable to be carried off in time of war by foes, who regarded such an exploit as a great deed of heroism. Hence when an invasion of the enemy in force was expected, the custom was to remove the bodies from the *morai* and bury them elsewhere.[4] The heads of enemies killed in battle were invariably kept and hung up as trophies of victory in the house of the conqueror. They seem to have been smoked in order to preserve them better.[5] It is said that they were used as cups to drink kava out of.[6]

After ten months or a year the obsequies were concluded by another funeral feast, which might last from eight to thirty days according to the rank of the deceased and the opulence of his family. At the same time offerings of food were presented afresh at the tomb, and the decorations were renewed, consisting of branches and leaves and strips of white bark-cloth, which waved like flags at the end of little white wands. At these anniversary feasts, to which, if the deceased was a man of quality, only chiefs were in

[1] Melville, *Typee*, p. 205.
[2] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 123.
[3] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 173.
[4] Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 134.
[5] Melville, *Typee*, p. 206.
[6] Clavel, *op. cit.* p. 47.

many cases admitted, great quantities of pigs were consumed.[1] The intention of the feast is said to have been to thank the gods for having permitted the dead person to arrive safely in the other world.[2]

§ 9. *Fate of the Soul after Death*

The souls of the dead were supposed to depart either to an upper or to a lower world, either to heaven or to a subterranean region called Havaiki. The particular destination of a soul after death was determined, not by moral considerations, not by the virtue or vice of the deceased, but by the rank he had occupied in this life: people of quality went to the upper world, and common people went to the lower, to Havaiki.[3] According to a more precise account, heaven was inhabited by deities of the highest order, by women who had died in childbed, by warriors who had fallen on the field of battle, by suicides, and especially by the aristocratic class of the chiefs. This celestial region was supposed to be a happy land, abounding in bread-fruit paste (*popoi*), pork, and fish, and offering the companionship of the most beautiful women imaginable. There the bread-fruit trees dropped their ripe fruit every moment to the ground, and the supply of coco-nuts and bananas never failed. There the souls reposed on mats much finer than those of Nukahiva; and every day they bathed in rivers of coco-nut oil. In that happy land there were plenty of plumes and feathers, and boars'-tusks, and sperm-whale teeth far better than even white men can boast of. The nether world, on the other hand, was peopled with deities of the second class and by ordinary human beings, who had no pretensions to gentility. But it was not a place of misery much less of punishment or torture; on the contrary, we are told that both the upper and the lower regions were happier than the earth which the living inhabit.[4] The approach to the lower world, curiously enough, was by sea. The soul sailed away in a coffin shaped like a canoe

[1] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 117 *sq.*
[2] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 173.
[3] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 44.
[4] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 220; Melville, *Typee*, p. 185. Compare Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 40.

(*pahaa*). When it came near the channel which divides the island Tahuata from the island Hivaoa, it was met by two deities or two opposing influences, one of which tried to push the soul into a narrow strait between Tahuata and a certain rock in the sea, while the other deity or influence endeavoured to contrive that the soul should keep the broad channel between the rock and Hivaoa. The souls that were thrust into the narrow strait were killed ; whereas such as kept the open channel were conducted safe by a merciful god to their destination.[1]

Sometimes the land of the dead was identified with a happy island or islands called Tiburones lying somewhere in the ocean to the west of Nukahiva. Not uncommonly natives of the Marquesas sailed away in great double canoes to seek and find these happy isles, but were never heard of again. On one occasion, for example, forty men in the island of Ua-pu, who had revolted against their chief and been defeated, embarked secretly by night and put to sea, hoping to discover the Fortunate Islands, where they would be beyond the reach of their offended lord, and where they might pass the remainder of their days in liberty and bliss. What became of them is unknown, for they were seen and heard of no more in their native island.[2]

But even the souls that went to heaven were supposed to stand in need of a canoe in order to reach the place of bliss. On this point Porter writes : "I endeavoured to ascertain whether they had an idea of a future state of rewards and punishments, and the nature of their heaven. As respects the latter article, they believed it to be an island, somewhere in the sky, abounding with everything desirable ; that those killed in war and carried off by their friends, go there, provided they are furnished with a canoe and provisions ; but that those who are carried off by the enemy, never reach it, unless a sufficient number of the enemy can be obtained to paddle his canoe there. For this reason they were so anxious to procure a crew for their priest, who was killed and carried off by the Happahs.

[1] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 220 *sq.*

[2] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 51 *sq.* ; Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 238 note, 239, 269, 270 ; Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 238 *sq.* ; Mathias G***, *op. cit.* pp. 234 *sq.*

They have neither rewards nor punishments in this world, and I could not learn that they expected any in the next." [1]

In the valley of Taipii (Typee), in the island of Nukahiva, Captain Porter visited "the chief place of religious ceremony." It was a platform of the usual sort situated in a fine grove at the foot of a steep mountain. On the platform was an idol of hard stone, rudely representing a deity in human shape of about life size and in a squatting posture. Arranged on either side of this idol, as well as in front and rear, were several other images of about the same size and of the same model, but better carved out of bread-fruit wood. The place was decorated with streamers of white cloth. A few paces from the grave were four fine war canoes, furnished with outriggers, and decorated with human hair, coral shells, and many white streamers. In the stern of each canoe was the effigy of a man with a paddle, steering, in full dress, decked with plumes, ear-rings, and all the usual ornaments. On enquiring of the natives, Captain Porter was informed that the dignified effigy seated in the stern of the most splendid canoe represented a priest who had been killed not long before by their enemies the Happahs. In the bottom of the priest's canoe Captain Porter found the putrefying bodies of two Taipiis (Typees) whom he and his men had recently killed in battle; and lying about the canoe he saw many other human carcasses, with the flesh still on them. The other canoes, he was told, belonged to different warriors who had been killed or had died not long since. "I asked them," continues Captain Porter, "why they had placed their effigies in the canoes, and also why they put the bodies of the dead Typees in that of the priest? They told me (as Wilson interpreted) that they were going to heaven, and that it was impossible to get there without canoes. The canoe of the priest being large, he was unable to manage it himself, nor was it right that he should, he being now a god. They had, therefore, placed in it the bodies of the Happas and Typees, which had been killed since his death, to paddle him to the place of his destination; but he had not been able yet to start, for the want of a full crew, as it would require ten to paddle

[1] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 113.

her, and as yet they had only procured eight. They told me also that the taboo, laid in consequence of his death, would continue until he had started on his voyage, which he would not be able to do until they had killed two more of their enemies, and by this means completed the crew. I inquired if he took any sea stock with him. They told me he did, and pointing to some red hogs in an enclosure, said that they were intended for him, as well as a quantity of bread-fruit, coco-nuts, etc., which would be collected from the trees in the grove. I inquired if he had far to go; they replied, no: and pointing to a small square stone enclosure, informed me that was their heaven, that he was to go there. This place was tabooed, they told me, for every one except their priests."[1]

But it was deemed necessary to provide a dead priest or chief with human victims for other purposes than to paddle his canoe to heaven. When a great chief died, two commoners were sometimes sacrificed for the purpose of escorting him to the abode of bliss; one of them carried the chief's girdle, and the other bore the head of the pig that had been slaughtered for the funeral feast. The head was intended as a present to the warden of the infernal regions, who, if he did not get this perquisite, would revile and stone the ghost, and shut the door in his face.[2] The number of human victims sacrificed at the death of a priest varied with the respect and fear which he had inspired in his lifetime;[3] a common number seems to have been three.[4]

The runaway English sailor, Roberts, who had long resided in the islands, assured the Russian explorer Lisiansky "that, on the death of a priest, three men must be sacrificed; two of whom are hung up in the burying-ground, while the

[1] Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 109-111. A similar, or the same, effigy of a dead chief seated in his canoe was seen by Melville in the same valley (*Typee*, pp. 183 *sq.*). He says that "the canoe was about seven feet in length; of a rich, dark-coloured wood, handsomely carved, and adorned in many places with variegated bindings of stained sinnate [cinnet], into which were ingeniously wrought a number of sparkling sea-shells, and a belt of the same shells ran all round it. The body of the figure—of whatever material it might have been made—was effectually concealed in a heavy robe of brown tappa [bark-cloth], revealing only the hands and head; the latter skilfully carved in wood, and surmounted by a superb arch of plumes."

[2] Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 163.

[3] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* p. 228.

[4] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 170.

third is cut to pieces, and eaten by visitors; all but the head, which is placed upon one of the idols. When the flesh of the first two are wasted away, the bones that remain are burnt. The custom of the country requires, that the men destined for sacrifice should belong to some neighbouring nation, and accordingly they are generally stolen. This occasions a war of six, and sometimes of twelve, months: its duration, however, depends upon the nearest relation of the deceased priest; who, as soon as he is acquainted with his death, retires to a place of taboo; and till he chooses to come out, the blood of the two parties does not cease to flow. During his retirement, he is furnished with everything he may require, human flesh not excepted."[1]

A curious mode of preparing a dead man to appear to advantage before the gods in the other world was to flay his corpse. A Catholic missionary tells us that when a dead body began to swell up, in consequence of internal putrefaction, it was customary to flay it and to preserve the skin as a precious relic in the family treasury, where the eye of a profane stranger could never fall on it.[2] The reason for observing the custom is not mentioned by this missionary, but it is explained by another missionary, Father Amable. It happened that the king or head chief of the island of Tahuata died, and that his body was brought to the house of the queen on the bay where Father Amable resided. For thirty days she kept the corpse in the house and occupied herself with skinning it with her fingers. Questioned by the missionary as to her reasons for this strange procedure, she answered that her husband's body must be without spot or stain, in order that the great goddess Upu might give him leave to dwell in her land and to bathe in her lake. For this deity rules over a sort of submarine Eden, planted with all sorts of excellent fruits and beautified by the calm waters of an azure lake. The natives of Tahuata believe that the souls of all who die in the archipelago assemble on the top of a high mountain called Kiukiu. When a great multitude of souls is there gathered together, the sea opens and the souls fall plump down into the paradise of the

[1] U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 81 *sq.*
[2] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 116.

goddess Upu. However, not all of them are permitted to enter the happy land and to enjoy the pleasures which it offers. Only such are admitted as have owned in their lifetime many servants and many pigs and have not been wicked. Further, none may enter in who bear on their body any marks of tattooing.[1] Hence the reason for flaying dead bodies seems to have been to efface, by removing the skin, the tattooed marks which would have acted as a fatal bar to the entrance of the ghost into paradise. As to the souls of slaves and the poor, in the opinion of the natives of Tahuata they go to a gloomy land, which is never illumined by the sun, and where there is nothing but muddy water to drink.[2] Nevertheless the people would seem to have believed that the souls of the dead lingered for a time beside their mouldering bodies before they took their departure for the far country. In this belief they sacrificed to them pigs, some baked, and some alive. The baked pigs they put in a hollow log and hung from the roof of the hut, and they said that a god named Mapuhanui, who in the beginning had bestowed pigs on men, used to come and feast on the carcasses in company with the ghost. But when they offered live pigs, they tethered the animals to the hut in which the dead body lay, and they fed them till the flesh dropped from the skeleton; after that they allowed the pigs to die of hunger.[3] Perhaps, like some other peoples, they imagined that the ghost hovered about his remains so long as the flesh adhered to the bones, but that when even that faint semblance of life had vanished he went away and had no further occasion for pigs, whether alive or dead.

However, the souls of the dead were not supposed to be permanently confined to the other world. After a long sojourn in it, all alike, whatever the region they inhabited in their disembodied state, could return to earth and be born again.[4] Indeed, according to the natives of Nukahiva, the interval between death and reincarnation was not unduly long; for "every one here is persuaded, that the soul of a grandfather

[1] Lettre du R. P. Amable, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, xix. (1847) pp. 22 *sq.*, 24.

[2] Lettre du R. P. Amable, *op. cit.* p. 24.

[3] Lettre du R. P. Amable, *op. cit.* pp. 23 *sq.*

[4] Lettre du R. P. Amable, *op. cit.* p. 24.

is transmitted by Nature into the body of his grandchildren; and that, if an unfruitful wife were to place herself under the corpse of her deceased grandfather, she would be sure to become pregnant."[1] Occasionally the soul of a dead person might even inhabit the body of an animal. Once when a whale was stranded on one of the islands, a priestess declared that it was the soul of a certain priest, which would wander until eight human victims were sacrificed to the gods. In vain her son would have substituted turtles for human beings; the people would not hear of it; the prescribed victims were captured from a neighbouring tribe and put to death in order to lay the ghost of the whale, or rather of the priest who had animated the whale's body.[2]

But the souls of the dead were also believed to return from the spirit land for other purposes than to be born again in the flesh. They might come as ghosts to haunt and torment the living, and as such they were greatly dreaded by the people.[3] The first watch of the night was the hour when they were supposed especially to come on errands of mischief.[4] Particularly dreaded were the ghosts of high priests and great chiefs, who retained in their spiritual form the passions and the rancours which they had nursed in life, and who returned in ghostly shape to earth to meddle with the affairs of the living, and to punish even trivial offences. To guard against these dangerous intrusions, the intervention of a priest or priestess was deemed indispensable; it was his or her business to counteract a spell cast on a family, or to heal a sickness inflicted on an individual by one of these ghostly vagrants.[5] Such was the fear of wandering ghosts that no Marquesan would dare to stir a step abroad at night without the light of a torch; for well he knew that evil spirits lurked beside the path to knock down and throttle any rash wayfarer who should dare to leave his footsteps unillumined.[6] Indeed, we are told that, of all beliefs in the minds of the natives, the belief in ghosts was the most deeply rooted. It is impossible to express the dread which they felt of spectres and

[1] Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 89.
[2] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 161 *sq.*
[3] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 40.
[4] Mathias G***, *op. cit.* p. 210.
[5] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 224 *sq.*
[6] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 227, 240.

apparitions; nobody was exempt from it. But it was only at night that these phantoms were to be feared. Though they remained invisible, they revealed themselves to the terror-stricken wanderer by sound and touch; the least noise heard in the darkness disclosed their presence; the least contact with them was a sentence of death, sudden or slow, but sure. Hence, if a man was obliged to go out after sunset, he would always take somebody with him to bear him company, even if he had to wake a comrade for the purpose. Among the women the fear of ghosts was yet greater, many of them would not stir abroad on a moonless night even in company. In passing by a burial-ground or a solitary tomb, people used to throw food towards it for the purpose of appeasing the ghost, who otherwise would have attacked them.[1]

This deep-seated fear of the dead has survived the conversion, real or nominal, of the Marquesans to Christianity. No native would even now venture into a cave where the remains of the dead have been deposited, not though the greatest treasures were to be found there, for such spots are believed to be constantly haunted by the ghosts of the departed. Nobody, it is said, would live in a house in which somebody has died; every such dwelling is immediately burnt down. Hence, when a person is grievously sick, a little primitive hut is erected beside the house, and he is carried out to die in it, and when he is dead, the hut is in like manner destroyed with fire.[2] A woman will sometimes commit suicide in order that her ghost may haunt and torment her unfaithful husband.[3]

On the other hand, ghosts in the olden time had also their utility, for they could be summoned up by a priest or priestess to give information on various subjects, such as the issue of an illness. On these occasions the wizard would hold a conversation with the spirit, whose voice could be heard by the listeners, though his or her shape, as usual, was invisible in the darkness. Sceptics thought that such communications were made by means of ventriloquism, and indeed a priestess, who had professed to evoke the soul of a

[1] Eyriaud des Vergnes, *op. cit.* pp. 31 *sq.*

[2] Baessler, *op. cit.* p. 234.

[3] Baessler, *op. cit.* pp. 193 *sq.*

dead chieftainess, solemnly maintained that she could make the voice of anybody, whether dead or alive, to speak from her stomach.[1]

In such beliefs and customs are contained as in germ the whole theory and practice of the worship of the dead.

NOTE.—We possess no thorough account of the native Marquesan society and religion as these existed before they were transformed by European influence. Some of the writers who have described the islanders and their customs spent only a few days or at most a few weeks among them. Captain Cook was at the Marquesas only five days, from the 6th to the 11th of April 1774.[2] The French explorer Marchand spent eight days in the islands from the 13th to the 21st of June 1791.[3] The Russian explorers Krusenstern and Lisiansky were with their two ships, the *Nadeshda* and *Neva*, at Nukahiva for ten days, from the 7th to the 17th of May 1804; along with them was the naturalist Langsdorff, who wrote an independent account of the voyage.[4] But though their stay was short, they had the advantage of meeting with two Europeans, an Englishman named E. Roberts, and a Frenchman named Jean (or Joseph) Baptiste Cabri, who had lived long in the islands and spoke the native language. These men acted as interpreters to the Russians and supplied them with most of the information which they give in their books concerning the customs and beliefs of the Marquesans. Roberts told them that he had been seven years in Nukahiva and two years previously in Santa Christina (Tau-ata); that he had been put ashore on the latter island out of an English merchant ship, the crew of which had mutinied against their captain and could not prevail upon him to join their party; and that in Nukahiva he had lately married a relation of the king's, by which he acquired great consideration, so that it would be easy for him to be of assistance to them. At the same time he earnestly warned them against the Frenchman, who had also resided for some years in Nukahiva, but whose character he painted in very dark colours. The two Russian captains, Krusenstern and Lisiansky, accordingly put their trust in Roberts and drew most of their information concerning the natives from him. On the other hand their naturalist, Langsdorff, made most use of the Frenchman. He admitted, indeed, that the Englishman was a man of better character, greater natural intelligence, and much higher education; but on the other hand he tells us that the Frenchman

[1] Radiguet, *op. cit.* pp. 227-238.

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, iii. 274-281; compare G. Forster, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1777), ii. 5 *sqq.*

[3] C. P. Claret Fleurieu, *Voyage round the World performed during the years 1790, 1791, and 1792 by Étienne Marchand* (London, 1801), i. 31, 51. Marchand's brief account is supplemented from other sources by his editor Fleurieu (*op. cit.* i. 55 *sqq.*).

[4] A. J. von Krusenstern, *Voyage round the World in the years 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1806* (London, 1813), i. 108 *sq.*, 133 *sqq.*; U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World* (London, 1814), pp. 62, 95; G. H. von Langsdorff, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise um die Welt in den Jahren 1803 bis 1807* (Frankfurt am Main, 1812), i. 75, 161.

had been longer in the island and possessed a more thorough mastery of the language and a greater intimacy with the natives, among whom he had lived as a savage among savages so long that he had almost forgotten his own native tongue. But Langsdorff took care to question both these men and only accepted as true statements in which they agreed with each other, and to this agreement he naturally attached the greater weight because his two informants were bitterly hostile to each other and therefore were unlikely to unite in deceiving him.[1] On the whole, then, the account which Langsdorff gives of Marquesan society and religion is perhaps more trustworthy as well as fuller than that of his two compatriots and companions, Krusenstern and Lisiansky.

Captain David Porter of the United States Navy was with his ship the *Essex* at Nukahiva from October 24th till December 9th, 1813.[2] A great part of his time was spent on shore and in close contact with the natives, and though he did not learn the language, he was able to employ as an interpreter an Englishman named Wilson, who had lived for many years in the islands, spoke the language of the natives with the same facility as his own, and had become a Marquesan in every respect except in colour. He proved indispensable to the American as an organ of communication with the people; and much of the information which Porter gives concerning the customs of the Marquesans was derived by him from this man.[3]

The American naval chaplain, the Rev. C. S. Stewart, paid about a fortnight's visit to Nukahiva, from July 27th to August 13th, 1829, while his ship, the *Vincennes*, was anchored at the island. But he received much information from the Rev. W. P. Crook, who spent nearly two years (1797 and 1798) in the Marquesas, having been the first missionary landed in the islands by the missionary ship *Duff*. During his residence in the islands Mr. Crook kept a journal, which he allowed Mr. Stewart to consult. The contents of the journal corroborated Mr. Stewart's own observations as to the inhabitants, and the account which he gives of the religion of the islanders is based mainly on the information derived from Mr. Crook[4] and is therefore valuable; for at the time when Mr. Crook landed in the Marquesas the customs and beliefs of the islanders were still practically unaffected by contact with Europeans.

The surgeon F. D. Bennett, on a whaling voyage spent a few days

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[1] Krusenstern, *op. cit.* i. 110-112; Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 79; Langsdorff, *op. cit.* i. 77, 83-85. As to the subsequent history of Roberts and Cabri, see Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Iles Marquises ou Nouka-hiva* (Paris, 1843), pp. 356-359.

[2] Captain David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean in the United States frigate Essex in the years 1812, 1813, and 1814*, Second Edition (New York, 1822), ii. 5, 141.

[3] D. Porter, *op. cit.* ii. 17 *sq.*

[4] C. S. Stewart, *Visit to the South Seas* (London, 1832), i. pp. x *sq.*, 193, 331. The writer speaks (p. 331) of his stay of "a fortnight at the Washington Islands." Mr. Crook first landed in the island of Santa Christina (Tauata) on June 6th, 1797. See James Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* (London, 1799), pp. 129 *sqq.* As to his subsequent history in the islands, see Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Iles Marquises ou Nouka-hiva*, pp. 35-40.

in Santa Christina (Tau-ata), from February 28th to March 4th, 1835; and his descriptions of what he saw are good so far as they go; but naturally he could collect but little accurate information as to the habits and ideas of the people in so short a time.[1]

One of the early Catholic missionaries to the Marquesas, Father Mathias G***, spent two years in the islands and has given us, in a series of letters, an account of the native customs and beliefs, which, though far from complete or systematic, is based on personal observation and is among the best that we possess.[2]

Hermann Melville lived among the Taipiis (Typees) in Nukahiva for more than four months,[3] and wrote a lively narrative of his experiences. His personal observations are valuable, but as he did not master the native language, he was not able to throw much light on the inner life of the people, and in particular on their religious ideas.

On the 1st of May, 1842, the Marquesas Islands were taken possession of for France by the French Admiral, Du Petit-Thouars;[4] and next year, to satisfy the interest of the French public in their new possession, a comprehensive work on the islands and their inhabitants was published by MM. Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz.[5] The authors had visited the islands with the expedition of the French navigator, J. Dumont d'Urville, in his ships the *Astrolabe* and the *Zélée*. But as the expedition stayed only about a week at Nukahiva, from August 26th to September 3rd, 1838,[6] the writers had little opportunity of making personal observations. Their work is mainly a careful compilation from earlier sources, and as such it is a useful and trustworthy summary of what was known about the archipelago and its inhabitants down to the date of publication.

Max Radiguet, one of the members of the expedition to the Marquesas under Admiral Du Petit-Thouars, passed a considerable time in the islands and wrote a graphic account of his experiences, which contains some valuable information as to the natives, their customs, religion, and mythology.[7] In the part which concerns the mythology he was assisted by an officer of artillery, M. Rohr, who had

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[1] F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the year 1833 to 1836* (London, 1840), i. 296, 346.

[2] Le P. Mathias G***, *Lettres sur les Iles Marquises* (Paris, 1843). The writer is not explicit as to the dates of his residence in the Marquesas; but he tells us that he spent two years in habitual intercourse with the natives (p. 49), and from other allusions which he makes in his narrative (pp. 28 *sq.*) it would seem that the years were 1839 and 1840. The first Catholic missionaries landed in 1838 (*ib.* p. 22), and others in 1839 (*ib.* pp. 23 *sq.*). Among the latter were Fathers Garcia and Guilmard (*ib.* p. 24). Father G*** may have been one of them.

[3] H. Melville, *Typee* (London, *Everyman's Library*), p. 254.

[4] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *op. cit.* pp. 119 *sqq.*

[5] Vincendon-Dumoulin et C. Desgraz, *Iles Marquises ou Nouka-hiva* (Paris, 1843).

[6] J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au Pole Sud et dans l'Océanie, Histoire du Voyage*, iv. (Paris, 1842), pp. 5, 49.

[7] Max Radiguet, *Les Derniers Sauvages*, Nouvelle Édition (Paris, 1882). The author does not inform us as to the exact length of his stay in the islands.

lived for several years in Nukahiva and was familiar with the language and customs of the people.[1]

In 1877 a good general account of the archipelago and its inhabitants was published at Paris. The author was a naval lieutenant, P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, who having lived in the islands in the official capacity of Resident for about six years (from 1868 to 1874) had ample time and opportunity for obtaining accurate information on the subject.[2] His work, though somewhat slight, is valuable so far as it goes; but it does not tell us much about the native religion, which in his time had probably lost a good deal of its original character through the influence of the missionaries and of civilisation.[3]

Some years later, in 1881 and 1882, a French naval doctor, Clavel by name, passed six months in the Marquesas. During his stay he made personal observations and collected information on the natives. These he subsequently published in a little work, which contains much of value;[4] but when he wrote almost all the natives had been nominally converted to Christianity and their ancient religion was practically extinct.[5]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the German traveller Arthur Baessler paid a short visit to the Marquesas. In his book of travel in the South Sea he has given us descriptions of the islands and the people as he saw them, including some account of the scanty remains of their stone monuments and images.[6]

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[1] M. Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 221 note.

[2] P. E. Eyriaud des Vergnes, *L'Archipel des Iles Marquises* (Paris, 1877).

[3] Some years previously a naval lieutenant, M. Jouan, who had been in command of the French military post at Nukahiva, published in the *Revue Coloniale* (1857–1858) some notes on the Marquesas, which are said to contain some useful information on the archipelago. See M. Radiguet, *op. cit.* p. 310 note. I have not seen the work of M. Jouan; but according to Radiguet it shows that in the twelve years and more which had elapsed since the French occupation of the islands the presence of French missionaries and of a French garrison had done little to civilise the natives.

[4] *Les Marquisiens*, par M. le Docteur Clavel (Paris, 1885).

[5] Clavel, *op. cit.* pp. 68-71.

[6] Arthur Baessler, *Neue Südsee-Bilder* (Berlin, 1900), pp. 189-242. The writer omits to mention the date of his visit to the islands, and the length of his stay in them.

CHAPTER VII

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY AMONG THE HAWAIIANS

§ 1. *The Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands*

THE Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands form an archipelago lying in the North Pacific Ocean just within the northern tropic. They stretch in a direction from north-west to south-east for more than four hundred miles and include eight inhabited islands, of which the most important are Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai. Of these Hawaii is by far the largest; indeed it is the largest island in Polynesia with the exception of New Zealand. The islands are all mountainous and of volcanic formation. In Hawaii two of the mountains are between 13,000 and 14,000 feet in height, and two of them are active volcanoes; one of them, named Kilauea, possesses the greatest active crater in the world, a huge cauldron of seething lava, which presents a spectacle of awe-inspiring grandeur when seen on a moonless night. The other and much loftier volcano, Mauna Loa, was the scene of a terrific eruption in 1877 and of another in 1881. Craters, large and small, hot springs, and other evidences of volcanic activity, abound throughout the archipelago. One of the craters on the island of Maui is said to be no less than fifteen miles in circumference and about two thousand feet deep. The islands appear to have been known to the Spaniards as early as the sixteenth century; but they were rediscovered in 1778 by Captain Cook, who was afterwards killed in a fight with the natives in Hawaii.[1]

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 4 *sqq.*; J. J. Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands* (London, 1843), pp. 1 *sqq.*; J. Remy,

Viewed from the sea the islands are apt to present an appearance of barrenness and desolation. The mountains descend into the sea in precipices often hundreds of feet high: their summits are capped with snow or lost in mist and clouds; and their sides, green and studded with clumps of trees in some places, but black, scorched and bare in others, are rent into ravines, down which in the rainy seasons cataracts rush roaring to the sea. With the changes of sunshine and shadow the landscape as a whole strikes the beholder now as in the highest degree horrid, dismal, and dreary, now as wildly beautiful and romantic with a sort of stern and sombre magnificence.[1] Inland, however, in many places the summits of the ridges crowned with forests of perpetual verdure, the slopes covered with flowering shrubs or lofty trees, the rocks mantled in creepers, the waterfalls dropping from stupendous cliffs, and the distant prospects of snowy peaks, bold romantic headlands, and blue seas, all arched by a summer sky of the deepest azure, combine to make up pictures of fairy-like and enchanting loveliness.[2]

The climate naturally varies with the height above the sea. On the coasts, though warm, it is remarkably equable, and perhaps no country in the world enjoys a finer or healthier climate than some parts of Hawaii and Maui. On the mountains all varieties of climate are to be found, from the tropical heat of the lowlands to the arctic cold of the two great peaks of Hawaii, Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa with their perpetual snows, which are not, however, always visible from the sea or from the foot of these giants. In the lowlands frost is unknown. The fresh breezes, which blow

Histoire de l'Archipel Havaiien (Paris and Leipzig, 1862), pp. vii *sqq.*; C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans*, ii. 271 *sqq.*; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, xi. 528 *sqq.*; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln* (Berlin, 1894), pp. 1 *sqq.*; F. H. H. Guillemard, *Australasia*, ii. 533 *sqq.*

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 94; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 34, 379; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, Fifth Edition (Boston, 1839), pp. 69 *sqq.*, 140; D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 366, 391; Ch. Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition*, New Edition (New York, 1851), iii. 373.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 13 *sq.*; C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* pp. 213 *sqq.*, 229 *sqq.*; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 426 *sqq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xiv *sq.*; Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* iii. 390 *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe* (London, 1840), i. 198 *sqq.* The vale of Anuanu, which runs up into the mountains from the plain of Honululu in the island of Oahu, is especially famed for its natural beauty.

from the sea during the day and from the mountains at night, temper the heat of the sun, and render the evenings delicious; nothing can surpass the splendour and clearness of the moonlight. Rain falls more abundantly on the windward or eastern side of the islands than on the leeward or western side. Thus at Hilo, on the eastern side of Hawaii, it rains almost every day, whereas in Kena, on the western side, rain hardly ever falls, and along the coast not a single water-course is to be seen for many miles. In general it may be said that the archipelago suffers from drought and hence occasionally from dearth.[1]

§ 2. *The Natives and their Mode of Life*

The natives of the Sandwich Islands are typical Polynesians. In general they are rather above the middle stature, well formed, with fine muscular limbs, open countenances, and features frequently resembling those of Europeans. The forehead is usually well developed, the lips thick, and the nostrils full, without any flatness or spreading of the nose. The complexion is tawny or olive in hue, but sometimes reddish brown. The hair is black or brown and occasionally fair or rather ruddy in colour, in texture it is strong, smooth, and sometimes curly. The gait is graceful and even stately. But in these islands, as in other parts of Polynesia, there is a conspicuous difference between the chiefs and the commoners, the superiority being altogether on the side of the chiefs. "The nobles of the land," says Stewart, "are so strongly marked by their external appearance, as at all times to be easily distinguishable from the common people. They seem, indeed, in size and stature to be almost a distinct race. They are all large in their frame, and often excessively corpulent, while the common people are scarce of the ordinary height of Europeans, and of a thin rather than full habit."[2] And the difference between the two ranks is as

[1] J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xvi *sqq.* Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 99 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 21 *sq.*; Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* iv. 283 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 12 *sqq.*; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, xi. 530.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 104.

obvious in their walk and general deportment as in their stature and size, the nobles bearing themselves with a natural dignity and grace which are wanting in their social inferiors. Yet there seems to be no reason to suppose that they belong to a different race from the commoners; the greater care taken of them in childhood, their better living, sexual selection, and the influence of heredity appear sufficient to account for their physical superiority. The women are well built and "beautiful as ancient statues" with a sweet and engaging expression of countenance. Yet on the whole the Hawaiians are judged to be physically inferior both to the Tahitians and to the Marquesans; according to Captain King, they are rather darker than the Tahitians, and not altogether so handsome a people. On the other hand they are said to be more intelligent than either the Tahitians or the Marquesans. Captain King describes them as of a mild and affectionate disposition, equally remote from the extreme levity and fickleness of the Tahitians, and from the distant gravity and reserve of the Tongans.[1] They practised tattooing much less than many other Polynesians, but their faces, hands, arms, and the forepart of their bodies were often tattooed with a variety of patterns.[2]

The staple food of the Hawaiians consists of taro (*kalo*), sweet potatoes, and fish, but above all of taro. That root (*Arum* or *Caladium esculentum*) is to the Hawaiians what bread-fruit is to the Tahitians, and its cultivation is their most important agricultural industry. It is grown wherever there is water or a marsh, and it is even planted on some arid heights in the island of Hawaii, where it yields excellent crops. Artificial irrigation was practised and even regulated by law or custom in the old days; for it was a rule that water should be conducted over every

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 112 *sq.*, 115 *sq.*; U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 123 *sq.*; L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde*, *Historique*, ii. Deuxième partie (Paris, 1839), p. 570; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 23; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 104, 106; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 77 *sqq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xxxvii *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 209. The last of these writers speaks in unfavourable terms of the personal appearance of the women, whom he found less handsome than the men and very inferior to the women of the Society Islands.

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 213 *sq.*, vii. 121; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 23.

plantation twice a week in general, and once a week during the dry season. The bread-fruit tree is not so common, and its fruit not so much prized, as in the Marquesas and Tahiti. The natives grew sweet potatoes even before the arrival of Europeans. Yams are found wild, but are hardly eaten except in times of scarcity. There are several sorts of bananas; the fruit for the most part is better cooked than raw. In the old days the cooking was done in the ordinary native ovens, consisting of holes in the ground lined with stones which were heated with fire. After being baked in an oven the roots of the taro are mashed and diluted with water so as to form a paste or pudding called *poe* or *poi*, which is sometimes eaten sweet but is more generally put aside till it has fermented, in which condition it is preferred by the natives. It is a highly nutritious substance, and though some Europeans complain of the sourness of taro pudding, others find it not unpalatable. Fish used to be generally eaten raw, seasoned with brine or sea-water. But they also commonly salt their fish, not for the sake of preserving it for a season of scarcity, but because they prefer the taste. They construct artificial fish-ponds, into which they let young fish from the sea, principally the fry of the grey mullet, of which the chiefs are particularly fond. Every chief has, or used to have, his own fish-pond. The natives are very skilful fishermen. In the old days they made a great variety of fish-hooks out of mother-of-pearl and tortoise shell as well as out of bone, and these they dragged by means of lines behind their canoes, and so caught bonettas, dolphins, and albicores. They took prodigious numbers of flying fish in nets. At the time when the islands were discovered by Captain Cook, the natives possessed pigs and dogs. The flesh of both of these animals was eaten, but only by persons of higher rank. Fowls were also bred and eaten, but they were not very common, and their flesh was not very much esteemed. The sugar-cane was indigenous in the islands, and the people ate it as a fruit; along with bananas and plantains it occupied a considerable portion of every plantation. Captain Cook found the natives skilful husbandmen, but thought that with a more extensive system of agriculture, the islands

could have supported three times the number of the existing inhabitants.[1] He remarked that the chiefs were much addicted to the drinking of kava, and he attributed some of the cutaneous and other diseases from which they suffered to an immoderate use of what he calls the pernicious drug.[2]

§ 3. *Houses, Mechanical Arts*

Captain King observed that in some respects the natives of the Sandwich Islands approached nearer in their manners and customs to the Maoris of New Zealand than to their less distant neighbours of the Society and Friendly Islands, the Tahitians and the Tongans. In nothing, he says, is this more observable than in their method of living together in small towns or villages, containing from about one hundred to two hundred houses, built pretty close together, without any order, and with a winding path leading through them. They were generally flanked towards the sea with loose detached walls, intended for shelter and defence.[3] The shape of the houses was very simple. They were oblong with very high thatched roofs, so that externally they resembled the top of hay-stacks or rather barns with the thatched roof sloping down steeply to two very low sides, and with gable ends to match. The entrance, placed indifferently in one of the sides or ends, was an oblong hole, so low that one had rather to creep than walk in, and often shut by a board of planks fastened together, which served as a door. No light entered the house but by this opening, for there were no windows. Internally every house consisted of a single room without partitions. In spite of the extreme simplicity of their structure, the houses were

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 215 *sq.*, 219, 224 *sq.*, vii. 126 *sq.*; U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, p. 126; Archibald Campbell, *Voyage round the World* (Edinburgh, 1816), pp. 161-63, 182 *sq.*, 194-197; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 61, 215 *sq.*, 420 (as to irrigation); C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 111-113; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 412, 426, 428, 430, 472; O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt* (Weimar, 1830), ii. 96; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 68 *sq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xxiv *sq.*, xliii; F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the World*, i. 213 *sqq.* As to the system of irrigating the taro fields, see especially O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits* (London, 1821), i. 340 *sq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 113 *sq.*

[3] J. Cook, vii. 125.

kept very clean; the floors were covered with a large quantity of dried grass, over which they spread mats to sit and sleep upon. At one end stood a kind of bench about three feet high, on which were kept the household utensils. These consisted merely of a few wooden bowls and trenchers, together with gourd-shells, serving either as bottles or baskets. The houses varied in size with the wealth or rank of the owners. Those of the poor were mere hovels, which resembled the sties and kennels of pigs and dogs rather than the abodes of men. The houses of the chiefs were generally large and commodious by comparison, some forty to sixty feet long by twenty or thirty feet broad, and eighteen or twenty feet high at the peak of the roof. Chiefs had always a separate eating-house, and even people of the lower ranks had one such house to every six or seven families for the men. The women were forbidden to eat in company with the men and even to enter the eating-house during the meals; they ate in the same houses in which they slept. The houses of the chiefs were enclosed in large yards, and sometimes stood on stone platforms, which rendered them more comfortable.[1]

In the mechanical arts the Hawaiians displayed a considerable degree of ingenuity and skill. While the men built the houses and canoes and fashioned wooden dishes and bowls, the women undertook the manufacture of bark-cloth (*kapa*) and mats. Bark-cloth was made in the usual way from the bark of the paper-mulberry, which was beaten out with grooved mallets. The cloth was dyed a variety of colours, and patterns at once intricate and elegant were stamped on it and stained in different tints. The mats were woven or braided by hand without the use of any frame or instrument. The materials were rushes or palm-leaves; the mats made of palm-leaves were much the more durable and therefore the more valuable. The coarser and plainer were spread on the floor to sleep on; the finer were of white colour with red stripes, rhombuses, and other figures

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 214 *sq.*; U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, p. 127; A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 180-182; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 107; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 320-322; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 371 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 67 *sq.*

interwoven on one side. Among the most curious specimens of native carving were the wooden bowls in which the chiefs drank kava. They were perfectly round, beautifully polished, and supported on three or four small human figures in various attitudes. These figures were accurately proportioned and neatly finished; even the anatomy of the muscles strained to support the weight were well expressed. The fishing-hooks made by the men, especially the large hooks made to catch shark, are described by Captain Cook as really astonishing for their strength and neatness; he found them on trial much superior to his own.[1]

The mechanical skill of these people was all the more remarkable because of the extreme rudeness and simplicity of the tools with which they worked. Their chief implement was an adze made of a black or clay-coloured volcanic stone and polished by constant friction with pumice-stone in water. They had also small instruments made each of a single shark's tooth, some of which were fixed to the fore-part of a dog's jawbone and others to a thin wooden handle of the same shape. These served as knives, and pieces of coral were used as files. Captain Cook found the natives in possession of two iron tools, one of them a piece of iron hoop, and the other an edge-tool, perhaps the point of a broadsword. These they could only have procured from a European vessel or from a wreck drifted on their coast. No mines of any kind are known to exist in the islands.[2]

Their weapons of war included spears, javelins, daggers, and clubs, all of them made of wood. They also slung stones with deadly effect. But they had no defensive armour; for the war-cloaks and wicker-work helmets, surmounted with lofty crests and decked with the tail feathers of the tropic bird, while they heightened the imposing and

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 218 *sq.*, vii. 133-135; L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 611 *sq.*; A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 192-195; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 109-113; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 114-116; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 66 *sq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 220-224; A. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 198; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 322; O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 97 (as to the kava bowls); J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 66. As to the absence of mines in the Hawaiian Islands, see J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xvi.

martial appearance of the wearers, must have proved rather encumbrances than protections. Captain Cook found the natives in possession of bows and arrows, but from their scarcity and the slenderness of their make he inferred that the Hawaiians, like other Polynesians, never used them in battle.[1]

§ 4. *Government, Social Ranks, Taboo*

The government of the Hawaiian Islands was an absolute monarchy or despotism; all rights of power and property vested in the king, whose will and power alone were law, though in important matters he was to a certain extent guided by the opinion of the chiefs in council. The rank of the king and the chiefs was hereditary, descending from father to son; but the appointment to all offices of authority and dignity was made by the king alone. Nevertheless posts of honour, influence, and emolument often continued in the same family for many generations. Nor were hereditary rank and authority confined to men; they were inherited also by women. According to tradition, several of the islands had been once or twice under the government of a queen. The king was supported by an annual tribute paid by all the islands at different periods according to his directions. It comprised both the natural produce of the country and manufactured articles. But besides the regular tribute the king was at liberty to levy any additional tax he might please, and even to seize and appropriate any personal possessions of a chief or other subject. Not infrequently the whole crop of a plantation was thus carried off by his retainers without the least apology or compensation.[2] However, the government of the

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 227 *sq.*, vii. 136 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 156 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 56 *sq.*

[2] U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* pp. 116 *sq.*; A. Campbell, *op. cit.* pp. 169 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 411 *sq.*; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 102; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 380; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 30 *sqq.* According to Jarves (*op. cit.* p. 33), "Rank was hereditary, and descended chiefly from the females, who frequently held the reins of government in their own right. This custom originated in the great license existing between the sexes; no child, with certainty, being able to designate his father, while no mistake could be made in regard to the mother."

whole Hawaiian archipelago by a single monarch was a comparatively modern innovation. Down to nearly the end of the eighteenth century the different islands were independent of each other and governed by separate kings, who were often at war one with the other; indeed there were sometimes several independent kingdoms within the same island. But towards the close of the eighteenth century an energetic and able king of Hawaii, by name Kamehameha (Tamehameha), succeeded in extending his sway by conquest over the whole archipelago, and at his death in 1819 he bequeathed the undivided monarchy to his successors.[1]

The whole body of chiefs fell into three classes or ranks. The first included the royal family and all who were intimately connected with it. The second included such as held hereditary offices of power or governorships of islands, after the time when the whole archipelago was united in a single kingdom. The third class embraced the rulers of districts, the headmen of villages, and all inferior chiefs. The members of the first two classes were usually called "high chiefs"; they were few in number and closely related both by blood and marriage. The members of the third class were known as "small" or "low" chiefs." They were by far the most numerous body of chiefs in any island, and were generally called *haku aina* or landowners, though strictly speaking the king was acknowledged in every island as the supreme lord and proprietor of the soil by hereditary right or the law of conquest. When Kamehameha had subdued the greater part of the islands, he distributed them among his favourite chiefs and warriors on condition of their rendering him not only military service, but a certain proportion of the produce of their lands. In this he appears to have followed the ancient practice invariably observed on the conquest of an island.[2] For "from the earliest periods of Hawaiian history, the tenure of lands has been, in most respects, feudal. The origin of the fiefs was the same as in

[1] C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 101; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 30; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. lxi *sq.*; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th Edition, xi. 528.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *op. cit.* p. 97; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 412 *sq.*, 414; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 33. Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 137 *sqq.*

the northern nations of Europe. Any chieftain who could collect a sufficient number of followers to conquer a district, or an island, and had succeeded in his object, proceeded to divide the spoils, or 'cut up the land,' as the natives termed it. The king, or principal chief, made his choice from the best of the lands. Afterwards the remaining part of the conquered territory was distributed among the leaders, and these again subdivided their shares to others, who became vassals, owing fealty to the sovereigns of the fee. The king placed some of his own particular servants on his portion as his agents, to superintend the cultivation. The original occupants who were on the land, usually remained under their new conqueror, and by them the lands were cultivated, and rent or taxes paid." [1]

Below the chiefs or nobles were the commoners, who included small farmers, fishermen, mechanics, such as house-builders and canoe-builders, musicians and dancers, in short, all the labouring classes, whether they worked for a chief or farmer or cultivated patches of land for their own benefit.[2] According to one account, "the common people are generally considered as attached to the soil, and are transferred with the land from one chief to another." [3] But this statement is contradicted by an earlier and perhaps better-informed writer, who spent some thirteen months in Oahu, while the islands were still independent and before the conversion of the people to Christianity. He tells us that commoners were not slaves nor attached to the soil, but at liberty to change masters when they thought proper.[4] On this subject Captain King observes: "How far the property of the lower class is secured against the rapacity and despotism of the great chiefs, I cannot say, but it should seem that it is sufficiently protected against private theft, or

[1] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* iv. 34.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 413.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 417. Compare J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 34.

[4] A. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 169. As to the length of Campbell's residence in Wahoo (Oahu), see *id.*, p. 153 note. The date of his residence was 1809–1810. Compare O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits* (London, 1821), iii. 246: "The people are almost subject to the arbitrary will of the lord, but there are no slaves or vassals (*glebae adscripti*). The peasant and the labourer may go wherever they please. The man is free, he may be killed, but not sold and not detained."

mutual depredation; for not only their plantations, which are spread over the whole country, but also their houses, their hogs, and their cloth, were left unguarded, without the smallest apprehensions. I have already remarked, that they not only separate their possessions by walls in the plain country, but that, in the woods likewise, wherever the horse-plantains grow, they make use of small white flags in the same manner, and for the same purpose of discriminating property, as they do bunches of leaves at Otaheite. All which circumstances, if they do not amount to proofs, are strong indications that the power of the chiefs, where property is concerned, is not arbitrary, but at least so far circumscribed and ascertained, as to make it worth the while for the inferior orders to cultivate the soil, and to occupy their possessions distinct from each other."[1] Yet on the other hand we are told by later writers that "in fact, the condition of the common people is that of slaves; they hold nothing which may not be taken from them by the strong hand of arbitrary power, whether exercised by the sovereign or a petty chief." On one occasion the writers saw nearly two thousand persons, laden with faggots of sandal-wood, coming down from the mountains to deposit their burdens in the royal store-houses, and then departing to their homes, weary with their unpaid labours, yet without a murmur at their bondage.[2] When at last, through contact with civilisation, they had learned to utter their grievances, they complained that "the people was crushed by the numerous forced labours and contributions of every sort exacted from them by the chiefs. It was, indeed, very hard to furnish the chiefs, on every requisition, with pigs, food, and all the good things which the folk possessed, and to see the great despoiling the humble. In truth, the people worked for the chiefs incessantly, they performed every kind of painful task, and they paid the chiefs all the taxes which it pleased them to demand."[3]

Certainly commoners were bound to pay great outward marks of deference to their social superiors, the chiefs, or nobles. Indeed, the respect almost amounted to adoration,

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 141 *sq.*
[2] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 415.
[3] J. Remy, *ob. cit.* p. 167.

for they were on no occasion allowed to touch their persons, but prostrated themselves before them, and might not enter their houses without first receiving permission.[1] Above all, the system of taboo or *kapu*, as it was called in the Hawaiian dialect,[2] oppressed the common people and tended to keep them in a state of abject subjection to the nobles; for the prescriptions of the system were numerous and vexatious, and the penalty for breaches of them was death. If the shadow of a subject fell on a chief, the subject was put to death; if he robed himself in the cloth or assumed the girdle of a chief, he was put to death; if he climbed on the wall of a chief's courtyard, he was put to death; if he stood upright instead of prostrating himself when a vessel of water was brought for the chief to wash with or his garments to wear, he was put to death; if he stepped on the shadow of a chief's house with his head smeared with white clay, or decked with a garland of flowers, or merely wetted with water, he was put to death; if he slept with his wife on a taboo day, he was put to death; if he made a noise during public prayers, he was put to death; if a woman ate pig, or coco-nuts, or bananas, or lobster, or the fish called *ulua*, she was put to death; if she went in a canoe on a taboo day, she was put to death; if husband and wife ate together, they were both put to death.[3]

In Hawaii, as in other parts of Polynesia, the taboo formed an important and essential part both of the religious and of the political system, of which it was at once a strong support and a powerful instrument. The proper sense of the word taboo (in Hawaiian *kapu*) is "sacred." This did not, however, imply any moral quality; it expressed rather "a connexion with the gods, or a separation from ordinary purposes, and exclusive appropriation to persons or things considered sacred"; sometimes it meant devoted as by a vow. Chiefs who traced their genealogy to the gods were called *arii taboo*, "chiefs sacred"; a temple was a *wahi taboo*,

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 413; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 33 *sq.* Compare J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 137.

[2] In the Hawaiian dialect the ordinary Polynesian T is pronounced K, and the Tongan B is pronounced P. Hence the Tongan *taboo* becomes in Hawaiian *kapoo* (*kapu*). See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. xxiii.

[3] J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. 159, 161, 167.

"place sacred"; the rule which prohibited women from eating with men, and from eating, except on special occasions, any fruits or animals ever offered in sacrifice to the gods, while it allowed the men to partake of them, was called *ai taboo*, "eating sacred." The opposite of *kapu* was *noa*, which means "general" or "common"; for example, *ai noa* signifies "eating generally" or "having food in common." Although it was employed for civil as well as sacred purposes, the taboo was essentially a religious ceremony and could be imposed only by the priests. A religious motive was always assigned for laying it on, though it was often done at the instance of the civil authorities; and persons called *kiaimoku*, "island keepers," a kind of police officers, were always appointed by the king to see that the taboo was strictly observed.[1]

The application of the restriction implied by taboo was either general or particular, either permanent or occasional. To take examples of permanent taboos, the idols and temples, the persons and names of the king and other members of the royal family, the persons of priests, canoes belonging to the gods, the houses, clothes, and mats of the king and priests, and the heads of men who were the devotees of any particular idol, were always taboo or sacred. The flesh of hogs, fowls, turtles, and several sorts of fish, coco-nuts, and almost everything offered in sacrifice were taboo or consecrated to the use of the gods and the men; hence women were, except in cases of particular indulgence, forbidden to partake of them. Particular places, such as those frequented by the king for bathing, were also permanently taboo. As examples of temporary taboos may be mentioned those which were imposed on an island or district for a certain time, during which no canoe or person was allowed to approach it. Particular fruits, animals, and the fish of certain places were occasionally taboo for several months, during which neither men nor women might eat them.[2] The predecessor of Kamehameha, king of Hawaii, "was taboo to such a degree that he was not allowed to be seen by day. He only showed himself in the night: if any person had but accidentally seen him by

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 385 *sqq.* Compare L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 597.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 387.

daylight he was immediately put to death; a sacred law, the fulfilment of which nothing could prevent."[1]

The seasons generally kept taboo were on the approach of some great religious ceremony, immediately before going to war, and during the sickness of chiefs. Their duration was various, and much longer in ancient than in modern times. Tradition tells of a taboo which lasted thirty years, during which men might not trim their beards and were subject to other restrictions. Another was kept for five years. Before the reign of Kamehameha forty days was the usual period; but in his time the period was shortened to ten or five days, or even to a single day. The taboo seasons might be either common or strict. During a common taboo the men were only required to abstain from their usual avocations, and to attend morning and evening prayers at the temple. But during a strict taboo every fire and light in the district or island must be extinguished; no canoe might be launched; no person might bathe or even appear out of doors, unless his attendance was required at the temple; no dog might bark, no pig grunt, and no cock crow; for if any of these things were to happen the taboo would be broken and fail to accomplish its object. To prevent this disaster the mouths of dogs and pigs were tied up, and fowls were put under a calabash, or a cloth was fastened over their eyes.[2]

The prohibitions of the taboo were strictly enforced; every breach of them was punished with death, unless the delinquent had powerful friends among the priests or chiefs, who could save him. The culprits were generally offered in sacrifice, being either strangled or clubbed at the temple; according to one account, they were burnt.[3]

The system seems to have been found at last too burdensome to be borne even by the king, who under it was forbidden to touch his food with his own hands, and had to submit to having it put into his mouth by another person, as if he were an infant.[4] Whatever his motive, Liholiho, son of

[1] O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits* (London, 1821), iii. 247.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 387 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 389. As to the taboo in Hawaii, see also J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 146 *sq.*; L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 597; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 31 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 50-52; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xxxviii *sq.*, 159 *sqq.*

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 388.

Kamehameha, had hardly succeeded his father on the throne of Hawaii when he abolished the system of taboo and the national religion at a single blow. This remarkable reformation took place in November 1819. When the first Christian missionaries arrived from America, some months later, March 30th, 1820, they were astonished to learn of a peaceful revolution, which had so opportunely prepared the way for their own teaching.[1]

§ 5. *Religion, the Gods*

Of the native Hawaiian religion, as it existed before the advent of Europeans and the conversion of the people to Christianity, we possess no adequate account. The defect is probably due in great measure to the readiness with which the islanders relinquished their old faith and adopted the new one. The transition seems to have been effected with great ease and comparatively little opposition ; hence when the missionaries settled in the islands a few months after the formal abolition of the ancient religion, paganism was already almost a thing of the past, and the Christian teachers were either unable or perhaps unwilling to record in detail the beliefs and rites which they regarded as false and pernicious. Be that as it may, we possess no such comparatively full and accurate records of the old Hawaiian religion, as we possess, for example, of the old pagan religion of the Tongans and the Samoans, who clung much more pertinaciously to the creed of their fathers than their more enlightened or more fickle kinsfolk in the Sandwich Islands. Hence we are obliged to content ourselves with some more or less meagre and fragmentary notices of the ancient Hawaiian system of religious belief and practice. But as the Hawaiians are, or were, pure-blooded Polynesians, we may assume with a fair degree of probability that in its broad lines their religious system conformed to the ordinary Polynesian type.

[1] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 603 ; O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 109 *sqq.* ; W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 30, 126 *sqq.*, 137, 204, 312 ; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 31, 32 *sq.* ; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 378 *sq.*, 397 *sq.*, 442 *sq.* ; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 197 *sq.*, 201 ; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. lxv, 133 *sqq.* ; H. Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-one Years in the Sandwich Islands* (Hartford, 1849), pp. 69 *sqq.* King Kamehameha the First died 8th May 1819.

On this subject Captain King, the colleague and successor of Captain Cook in his last voyage, observes as follows: "The religion of these people resembles, in most of its principal features, that of the Society and Friendly Islands. Their *Morais*, their *Whattas*, their idols, their sacrifices, and their sacred songs, all of which they have in common with each other, are convincing proofs that their religious notions are derived from the same source. In the length and number of their ceremonies this branch indeed far exceeds the rest; and though in all these countries there is a certain class of men to whose care the performance of their religious rites is committed, yet we had never met with a regular society of priests, till we discovered the cloisters of Kakooa in Karakakooa Bay [in the island of Hawaii]. The head of this order was called *Orono*; a title which we imagined to imply something highly sacred, and which, in the person of Omeeah, was honoured almost to adoration. . . . It has been mentioned that the title of *Orono*, with all its honours, was given to Captain Cook; and it is also certain that they regarded us generally as a race of people superior to themselves; and used often to say that great *Eatooa* [*atuas*, spirits] dwelled in our country. The little image, which we have before described as the favourite idol on the *Morai* in Karakakooa Bay, they called *Koonooraekaiee*, and said it was Terreeoboo's god, and that he also resided amongst us. There are found an infinite variety of these images both on the *Morais*, and within and without their houses, to which they give different names; but it soon became obvious to us in how little estimation they were held, from their frequent expressions of contempt of them, and from their even offering them to sale for trifles. At the same time there seldom failed to be some one particular figure in favour, to which, whilst this preference lasted, all their adoration was addressed. This consisted in arraying it in red cloth, beating their drums, and singing hymns before it, laying bunches of red feathers, and different sorts of vegetables, at its feet, and exposing a pig or a dog to rot on the *whatta* that stood near it. In a bay to the southward of Karakakooa, a party of our gentlemen were conducted to a large house, in which they found the black figure of a man, resting on his fingers and toes, with his head inclined back-

ward, the limbs well formed and exactly proportioned, and the whole beautifully polished. This figure the natives call *Maee*; and round it were placed thirteen others of rude and distorted shapes, which they said were the *Eatooas* [spirits] of several deceased chiefs, whose names they recounted. The place was full of *whattas*, on which lay the remains of their offerings. They likewise give a place in their houses to many ludicrous and some obscene idols, like the Priapus of the ancients." [1]

The general Hawaiian name for god was *akua*, corresponding to the more usual Polynesian form *atua*.[2] The four principal Hawaiian deities were Ku, Kane, Kanaloa, and Lono.[3] Their names are only dialectically different forms of Tu, Tane, Tangaroa or Tagaloa, and Rongo, four of the greatest Polynesian gods.[4] Of these deities it is said that Ku, Kane, and Lono formed the original Hawaiian triad or trinity, who were worshipped as a unity under the name of Ku-kau-akahi, "the one established." [5] The meaning or essence of the three persons of the trinity is said to be Stability (Ku), Light (Tane), and Sound (Lono).[6] "These gods," we are told, "created the three heavens as their dwelling-place, then the earth, sun, moon, and stars, then, the host of angels and ministers. Kanaloa (Tangaroa), who represented the spirit of evil, was a later introduction into the Hawaiian theology; he it was who led the rebellion of spirits, although Milu is in other traditions credited with this bad pre-eminence." [7] We read that when the trinity were at work on the task of creating the first man, the bad spirit Kanaloa, out of rivalry, also made an image, but he could not endow it with life. So, in a rage, he cried to Kane, "I will take your man, he shall die!" And that, it is said, was the origin of death. The reason why the spirits, under the

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 142-144.

[2] J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xxxix; E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 30, *s.v.* "Atua."

[3] J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xxxix; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 40; H. T. Cheever, *Life in the Sandwich Islands* (London, 1851), p. 11; A. Bastian, *Die heilige Sage der Polynesier* (Leipzig, 1881), p. 131; *id.*, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien* (Berlin, 1883), p. 225; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, pp. 97 *sq.*

[4] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* 425, 461, 464, 540, *s.vv.* "Rongo," "Tane," "Tangaroa," "Tu."

[5] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* p. 425, *s.v.* "Rongo."

[6] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* pp. 461, 540, *s.vv.* "Tane," "Tu."

[7] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* p. 540, *s.v.* "Tu."

leadership of Kanaloa, rebelled was that they had been denied the sacrifice of kava. For their rebellion they were thrust down to the lowest depth of Darkness or Night (*Po*).[1]

A fuller account of these momentous transactions presents a close, perhaps a suspicious, resemblance to the Biblical narrative of the same events. It runs as follows:

"According to ancient Hawaiian traditions, there existed in the chaos three mighty gods, Kane, Ku, and Lono. By their common action light was brought into the chaos. Then the gods created three heavenly spheres, in which they dwelt, and last of all the earth, sun, moon, and stars. Out of their spittle they thereupon created a host of angels, who had to render service to the three original deities. Last of all came the creation of man. His body was fashioned out of red earth, and his head out of white clay, and Kane, the highest of the gods, breathed into this Hawaiian Adam the breath of life. Out of one of his ribs the Hawaiian Eve was created. The newly formed pair, by name Kumuhonua and Keolakuhonua, were placed in a beautiful paradise called Paliuli, which was watered by the three rivers of life, and planted with many fine trees, among them the sacred bread-fruit tree. The mightiest of the angels, Kanaloa, the Hawaiian Lucifer, desired that the newly created human pair should worship him, which was forbidden by God the Father, Kane. After vain attempts to create a new man devoted to himself, Kanaloa, out of desire for vengeance, resolved to ruin the first human pair created by the gods. In the likeness of a great lizard he crept into Paradise and seduced the two inhabitants of the same into committing sin, whereupon they were driven out of Paradise by a powerful bird sent by Kane. Then follow, as in the Bible, the legends of the Hawaiian Cain (Laka) and the Hawaiian Noah (Nuu), by whom the ancestors of the Hawaiian people are said to have been saved from the universal flood."[2] The story of the creation of the first woman out of a rib of the

[1] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* p. 464, *s.v.* "Tangaroa." According to another account, the evil spirit was not Kanaloa, but Ku; Kanaloa was a younger brother of Kane, and helped him in his beneficent labours. See A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, pp. 97 *sq.* This latter version agrees with the view of Kane and Kanaloa as divine twins. See below, pp. 394 *sq.*

[2] A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 97.

first man appears to have been widespread in Polynesia, for it is reported also from Tahiti,[1] Fakaofo or Bowditch Island,[2] and New Zealand.[3]

Of the three persons in the Hawaiian trinity, Kane (Tane) is said to have been the principal. He was especially associated with light; in a fragment of an ancient liturgy he is called Heaven-father (*Lani-makua*), and in a very ancient chant he is identified with the Creator. When after the great flood the Hawaiian Noah, who is called Nuu, left his vessel, he offered up sacrifice to the moon, saying, "You are doubtless a transformation of Tane." But the deity was angry at this worship of a material object; nevertheless, when Nuu expressed his contrition, the rainbow was left as a pledge of forgiveness.[4]

According to one account, the two great gods Kane and Kanaloa were twins. In Hawaii twins are regarded as superior to ordinary mortals both in mind and body; hence it was natural to conceive of a pair of divine twins, like the Dioscuri in Greek mythology. And, like the Dioscuri, the divine Hawaiian twins sometimes appeared together to their worshippers as helpers in time of need. Thus, in a season of dearth, when people were dying of hunger, a poor fisher lad in the island of Lanai set up a tiny hut on the sea-shore, and there day by day he offered a little from the scanty store of fish which his family had caught; and as he did so he prayed, saying, "Here, O god, is fish for thee." One day, as he sat there, racked with unsatisfied yearning for the divine assistance, two men came walking that way and rested at the hut; and, taking them to be weary wanderers, the fisher lad willingly gave them what little food he had left over. They slept there that night, and next day, when they were departing, they revealed themselves to him as the two gods Kane and Kanaloa, and they told him that his prayer had been heard, and that salvation would follow. Sure enough, plenty soon returned to the land, and on the spot where the little hut had stood, a stone temple was built

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, i. 110 *sq.*; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 312 *sq.*

[2] G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 267 *sq.*

[3] J. L. Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand* (London, 1817), i. 59. Compare *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, i. 9 *sq.*

[4] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* p. 461, *s.v.* "Tane."

in stately terraces.[1] Again, we hear how when drought had lasted long in the island of Oahu, and death stared the farmers in the face for lack of water, the gods Kane and Kanaloa appeared in the likeness of two young men and showed them a spring, which was afterwards consecrated to the divine twins.[2] Once more, it is said that, when the two deities were in Oahu, it chanced that they could find no water with which to moisten their dry food. Then at Kane's direction Kanaloa struck a stone with his spear, and from the stone there sprang a fountain, which bears the name of Kane to this day, and still it rises and sinks on the day of the moon which is sacred to that divinity.[3]

The god Lono was, as we have seen, no other than the great Polynesian deity Rongo, the two names being the same word in dialectically different forms. He was one of the most popular gods of Hawaii;[4] the seasons and other natural phenomena were associated with him, and prayers for rain were particularly addressed to him.[5] According to one account, he was an uncreated, self-existent deity;[6] but according to another account he was an ancient king of Hawaii, who rashly killed his wife on a suspicion of infidelity, and then, full of remorse, carried her lifeless body to a temple and made a great wail over it. Thereafter he travelled through Hawaii in a state of frenzy, boxing and wrestling with every one whom he met. The people in astonishment said, "Is Lono entirely mad?" He replied, "I am frantic with my great love." Having instituted games to commemorate his wife's death, he embarked in a triangular canoe for a foreign land. Before he departed, he prophesied, saying, "I will return in after times, on an island bearing coco-nut trees, swine, and dogs." After his departure he was deified by his countrymen, and annual games of boxing and wrestling were instituted in his honour.[7] When Captain

[1] A. Bastian, *Die heilige Sage der Polynesier*, pp. 131, 132.

[2] A. Bastian, *op. cit.* pp. 132 *sq.*

[3] A. Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 133. As to the divine twins in Hawaii, see also *id.*, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 243.

[4] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 41.

[5] A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 98.

[6] E. Tregear, *op. cit.* p. 425, *s.v.* "Rongo."

[7] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 135; O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt* (Weimar, 1830), ii. 88 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 41 *sq.*; H. Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-one Years in the Sandwich Islands* (Hartford, 1849), p. 32; A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 246.

Cook arrived in Hawaii, the natives took him to be their god Lono returned according to his prophecy. The priests threw a sacred red mantle on his shoulders and did him reverence, prostrating themselves before him; they pronounced long discourses with extreme volubility, by way of prayer and worship. They offered him pigs and food and clothes, and everything that they offered to the gods. When he landed, most of the inhabitants fled before him, full of fear, and those who remained prostrated themselves in adoration. They led him to a temple, and there they worshipped him. But afterwards in a brawl, when they saw his blood flowing and heard his groans, they said, "No, this is not Rono," and one of them struck him, so that he died. But even after his death, some of them still thought that he was Rono, and that he would come again. So they looked on some of his bones, to wit his ribs and his breastbone, as sacred; they put them in a little basket covered all over with red feathers, and they deposited it in a temple dedicated to Rono. There religious homage was paid to the bones, and thence they were carried every year in procession to several other temples, or borne by the priests round the island, to collect the offerings of the faithful for the support of the worship of the god Rono.[1]

The great Polynesian god or hero Maui was known in Hawaii, where the stories told of him resembled those current in other parts of the Pacific. He is said to have dragged up the islands on his fishing-hook from the depths of the ocean, and to have brought men their first fire.[2] One day, when his wife was making bark-cloth and had not time to finish it before night, Maui laid his hand on the sun and prevented it from going down till the work was completed.[3]

The national war-god of Hawaii was named Tairi (Kaili). In the evening he used to be seen flitting about near his temple in the form of a sort of luminous vapour, like a flame or the tail of a comet. A similar appearance is also occa-

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 134-136; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 376; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. 29-37; O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 98 *sq.*

[2] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 236, *s.v.* "Maui"; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 98.

[3] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 433; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 26.

sionally seen in the Society Islands, where the terrified natives formerly identified it with their god Tane, and supposed that the meteor was the deity flying from temple to temple or seeking whom he might destroy.[1] The image of the war-god Tairi used to be carried to battle by the priest, who held it aloft above the ranks. It was four or five feet high; the upper part was of wicker-work, covered with red feathers; the face grinned hideously; the mouth displayed triple rows of dog's or shark's teeth; the eyes gleamed with mother of pearl; and the head was crowned with a helmet crested with long tresses of human hair. In the battle the priest used to distort his face into a variety of frightful grimaces and to utter appalling yells, which were supposed to proceed from the god whom he bore or attended. But the national war-god was not the only deity whose image was borne to battle. Other chiefs of rank had their war-gods carried near them by their priests; and if the king or chief was killed or taken, the god himself was usually captured also. The presence of their deities inspired the warriors with courage; for they imagined the divine influence to be essential to victory.[2] The diviners were consulted immediately before a battle. They slew the victims, and noticed the face of the heavens, the passage of clouds over the sun, and the appearance of a rainbow. If the omens were favourable, the image of the principal war-god was brought out in front of the whole army and placed near the king. The priest then prayed to the gods, beseeching them to prove themselves stronger than the gods of the enemy in the ensuing engagement, and promising them hecatombs of victims in the event of victory. The bodies of foes slain in the battle were dragged to the king or priest, who offered them as victims to his gods.[3]

The gods of Hawaii fell into two classes, according as they were believed to have been primaeval deities born of Night (Po), or the souls of men who had been deified after death. For it was believed to be possible to detain the soul of a beloved or honoured person at death by keeping his clothes or his bones; and the soul could thereafter be

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 119. [2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 158 *sq.*
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 157 *sq.*, 159.

invoked and could speak through the mouth of the person into whom it had entered. Both classes of deities, the primaeval and the human, were credited with the power of making people ill.[1] One way of obtaining a guardian deity for a family was to take the body of a still-born child and throw it into the sea or bury it in the earth; in the former case the embryo was supposed to turn into a shark, in the latter case into a grasshopper. When it was deemed necessary to obtain the help of a deity (*akua*) for a special purpose, such as success in fishing or in canoe-building, the divine spirit could be conjured into an image (*kii*), and could thereafter appear in a dream to his worshipper and reveal to him what food he desired to have dedicated to him, and what accordingly the worshipper must abstain from eating. Often the god showed himself to the dreamer in the shape of a stone or other object; and on awakening the man was bound to procure the object, whatever it was, and to honour it with prayer and sacrifice, in order to ensure the protection of the deity. Prayers addressed to private gods were usually the property of the owner, who was commonly also their author; whereas prayers addressed to a public god, such as Kane, had to be learned from a priest or other adept.[2]

Among the deities who had once been men would seem to have been the god of medicine, the Hawaiian Aesculapius. It is said that many generations ago a certain man named Koreamoku received all medicinal herbs from the gods, who also taught him the use of them. After his death he was deified, and a wooden image of him was placed in a large temple at Kairua, to which offerings of hogs, fish, and cocoanuts were frequently presented. Oronopuha and Makanuiairomo, two friends and disciples of Koreamoku, continued to practise the healing art after the death of their master, and they too were deified after death, particularly because they were often successful in driving away the evil spirits which afflicted the people and threatened them with death. To these deified men the priests addressed their prayers when they administered medicine to the sick.[3]

[1] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, pp. 269 *sq.*

[2] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, pp. 271 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 335 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 71.

Of all the deities of Hawaii the most dreaded was Pele, the goddess of the volcanic fire, whose home was in the great and ever active volcano of Kilauea. There she dwelt with the other members of her family, brothers and sisters. They were all said to have come to Hawaii from a foreign country called Tahiti after the great deluge had subsided. The cones which rise like islands from the vast sea of boiling lava, vomiting columns of smoke or pyramids of flame, were the houses where these volcanic deities lived and amused themselves by playing at draughts: the crackling of the flames and the roaring of the furnaces were the music of their dance; and the red flaming surge was the surf wherein they sported, swimming on the rolling fiery waves.[1] The filaments of volcanic glass, of a dark olive colour and as fine as human hair, some straight, some crimped or frizzled, which are to be seen abundantly on the sides of the crater, and on the plain for miles round, are called by the natives "Pele's hair"; in some places they lie so thick as to resemble cobwebs covering the surface of the ground.[2] Near the crater grow bushes bearing clusters of red and yellow berries resembling large currants; of these the natives formerly would never eat till they had thrown some of the clusters into the thickest of the smoke and vapour as an offering to the goddess of the volcano.[3] Vast numbers of hogs, some alive, others cooked, used to be cast into the craters when they were in action or when they threatened an eruption; and when they boiled over, the animals were flung into the rolling torrent of lava to appease the gods and arrest the progress of the fiery stream. For the whole island had to pay tribute to the gods of the volcano and to furnish provisions for the support of their ministers; and whenever the chiefs or people failed to send the proper offerings or incurred the displeasure of the dreadful beings by insulting them or their ministers, or by breaking the taboos which had to be observed in the vicinity of the craters, the angry deities would spout lava from the mountain or march by subterranean passages to the

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 237, 246-249; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 42 *sq.*

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 363 *sq.*; Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* iv. 129.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 234-236.

abode of the culprits and overwhelm them under a flood of molten matter. And if the fishermen did not offer them enough fish, they would rush down, kill the fish with fire, and, filling up the shoals, destroy the fishing-grounds entirely.[1] People who passed by the volcano of Kilauea often presented locks of hair to Pele by throwing them into the crater with an appropriate address to the deity.[2] On one occasion, when a river of lava threatened destruction to the people of the neighbourhood, and the sacrifice of many hogs, cast alive into the stream, had not availed to stay its devastating course, King Kamehameha cut off some of his own sacred locks and threw them into the torrent, with the result that in a day or two the lava ceased to flow.[3] In the pleasant and verdant valley of Kaua there used to be a temple of the goddess, where the inhabitants of Hamakua, a district of Hawaii, formerly celebrated an annual festival designed to propitiate the dread divinity and to secure their country from earthquakes and floods of lava. On such occasions large offerings of hogs, dogs, and fruit were made, and the priests performed certain rites.[4] Worshippers of Pele also threw some of the bones of their dead into the volcano, in the belief that the spirits of the deceased would then be admitted to the society of the volcanic deities, and that their influence would preserve the survivors from the ravages of volcanic fire.[5] Nevertheless the apprehensions uniformly entertained by the natives of the fearful consequences of Pele's anger prevented them from paying very frequent visits to the vicinity of the volcano; and when on their inland journeys they had occasion to approach the mountain, they were scrupulously attentive to every injunction of her priests, and regarded with a degree of superstitious veneration and awe the appalling spectacle which the crater, with its sea of molten and flaming lava, presented to their eyes.[6] They even requested strangers not to dig or scratch the sand in its neighbourhood for fear of displeasing the goddess and provoking her to manifest her displeasure by an eruption.[7]

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 250.
[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 350.
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 59 *sq.*
[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 350.
[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 361.
[6] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 275.
[7] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 239.

The service of Pele was regularly cared for by an hereditary steward (*kahu*) and an hereditary priestess. The duty of the steward was to provide the materials for the public sacrifices, including the food and raiment for the goddess; it was for him to furnish the hogs and fowls, to cultivate the taro, sweet potatoes, and sugar-cane which were to serve her for nourishment, to tend the plants from which her garments were to be made, and to have all things in readiness for the offerings at the appointed seasons. Of the plantations sacred to this use, one was on the sea-shore, and another in the broken ground within the precincts of the crater; and the steward with his family resided sometimes in the one place and sometimes in the other. When the time came for offering the sacrifice, the priestess descended into the depths of the volcano, and there approaching as near as possible to the spot where the fire burned most furiously, she cast into it her gifts, saying, "Here, Pele, is food for you, and here is cloth," whereby she mentioned each article as she flung it into the flames.[1] Sometimes the priestess claimed to be inspired by Pele and even to be the goddess in person. One of the priestesses, in an interview with the missionary William Ellis, assumed a haughty air and declared, "I am Pele; I shall never die; and those who follow me, when they die, if part of their bones be taken to Kilauea, will live with me in the bright fires there." In a song she gave a long account of the deeds and honours of the goddess, who, she said, dwelt in the volcano and had come in former times from the land beyond the sky. This song she chanted or recited in a rapid and vociferous manner, accompanied by extravagant gestures, working herself up to a state of excitement in which she appeared to lose all self-command. She also claimed to be able to heal the sick through the indwelling spirit of the goddess.[2] But the goddess was served also by priests. We read of one such who offered prayers to her and assured the people that thereafter she would do them no harm.[3]

The Hawaiians also paid religious reverence to certain

[1] C. S. Stewart, *A Visit to the South Seas* (London, 1832), ii. 104.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 309-311. For other interviews with priestesses of the goddess see *id.*, iv. 275 *sq.*; C. S. Stewart, *Visit to the South Seas*, ii. 100-103.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 378.

birds, fish, and animals. In a village Captain King saw two tame ravens which the people told him were *eatooas* (*atuas*, *akuas*), that is, gods or spirits, cautioning him at the same time not to hurt or offend them.[1] The native authors of a work on the history of Hawaii, speaking of the ancient religion of their people, tell us that "birds served some as idols; if it was a fowl, the fowl was taboo for the worshippers, and the same for all the birds which were deified. The idol of another was a four-footed animal, and if it was a pig, the pig was taboo for him. So with all the animals who became gods. Another had a stone for his idol; it became taboo, and he could not sit upon the stone. The idol of another was a fish, and if it was a shark, the shark was taboo for him. So with all the fish, and so they deified all things in earth and heaven, and all the bones of men."[2] Further, the same writers observe that "the trees were idols for the people and for the chiefs. If a man had for his idol the *ohia* tree, the *ohia* was taboo for him; if the bread-fruit tree was the idol of another, the bread-fruit tree was taboo for him. The taboo existed likewise for all the trees out of which men had made divine images, and it was the same also for food. If taro was a person's idol, taro was taboo for him. It was the same for all the eatables of which they had made gods."[3] This deification of birds, fish, animals, plants, and inanimate objects resembles the Samoan system and may, like it, be a relic of totemism.[4] Among the living creatures to which they thus accorded divine honours were lizards, rats, and owls.[5]

Among the deified fishes it would seem that the shark held a foremost place. On almost every cape jutting out into the sea, a temple used to be built for the worship of the shark. The first fish of each kind, taken by the fishermen, were always carried to the temple and offered to the god, who was supposed to have driven them towards the shore.[6] When the king or the priests imagined that the shark wanted food, they sallied forth with their attendants, one of whom carried a rope with a running noose. On

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 144.
[2] J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. 165.
[3] J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. 163, 165.
[4] See above, pp. 182 *sqq.*, 200 *sqq.*
[5] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 594.
[6] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 90; compare *id.*, pp. 129 *sq.*

coming to a group or crowd of people, they threw the rope among them, and whoever happened to be taken in the snare, whether man, woman, or child, was strangled on the spot, the body cut in pieces, and flung into the sea, to be bolted by the ravenous monsters.[1] Fishermen sometimes wrapped their dead in red native cloth, and threw them into the sea to be devoured by the sharks. They thought that the soul of the deceased would animate the shark which had eaten his body, and that the sharks would therefore spare the survivors in the event of a mishap at sea.[2] It was especially stillborn children that were thus disposed of. The worshipper of the shark would lay the body of the infant on a mat, and having placed beside it two roots of taro, one of kava, and a piece of sugar-cane, he would recite some prayers, and then throw the whole bundle into the sea, fully persuaded that by means of this offering the transmigration of the soul of the child into the body of a shark would be effected, and that thenceforth the formidable monster would be ready to spare such members of the family as might afterwards be exposed to his attack. In the temples dedicated to sharks there were priests who, at sunrise and sunset, addressed their prayers to the image which represented the shark; and they rubbed themselves constantly with water and salt, which, drying on their skin, made it appear covered with scales. They also dressed in red cloth, uttered piercing yells, and leaped over the wall of the sacred enclosure; moreover they persuaded the islanders that they knew the exact moment when the children that had been thrown into the sea were transformed into sharks, and for this discovery they were rewarded by the happy parents with liberal presents of little pigs, roots of kava, coco-nuts, and so forth.[3] The priests also professed to be inspired by sharks and in that condition to foretell future events. Many people accepted these professions in good faith and contributed to support the professors by their offerings.[4]

From the foregoing account it appears that some at least of the worshipful sharks were supposed to be animated by

[1] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 422 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 45.
[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 361.
[3] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 595 *sq.*
[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* ii. 65.

the souls of the dead. Whether the worship of other sacred animals in Hawaii was in like manner combined with a theory of transmigration, there seems to be no evidence to decide. We have seen that a similar doubt rests on the worship of animals in Tonga.[1]

§ 6. *Priests, Sorcerers, Diviners*

The priesthood formed a numerous and powerful body. Their office was hereditary. They owned much property in people and lands, which were heavily taxed for their support. Each chief had his family priest, who followed him to battle, carried his war-god, and superintended all the sacred rites of his household. The priests took rank from their gods and chiefs. The keeper of the national war-god, who was immediately attached to the person of the king, was the high priest.[2] In the inner court of the great temple dedicated to Tairi, the war-god, stood a lofty frame of wicker-work, in shape something like an obelisk, hollow within and measuring four or five feet square at the base. Within this framework the priest stood and gave oracles in the name of the god, whenever the king came to consult the deity on any matter of importance, such as a declaration of war or the conclusion of peace; for the war-god was also the king's oracle. The oracular answer, given by the priest in a distinct and audible voice, was afterwards reported by the king, publicly proclaimed, and generally acted upon.[3] When the villages failed to pay their tribute punctually to the king, he used to send forth a priest bearing the image of the great god Rono, who scoured the country of the defaulters for twenty-three days and obliged them to pay double tribute. The priest who bore the image was strictly tabooed; during his peregrination he might not touch anything with his hands; his food had to be put into his mouth either by the chiefs of the villages where he halted or by the king himself, who accompanied him.[4]

Distinct from the regular priests were the diviners or

[1] See above, pp. 92 *sqq.*
[2] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 48.
[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 97.
[4] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 596.

sorcerers who formed a sort of lower priesthood or clergy. Their services were employed for various purposes, such as to discover the cause of illness or to detect a thief. The people generally believed that all deaths, which were not due to acts of violence, were wrought either by the action of a deity or by the incantations of a sorcerer. Hence in cases of protracted illness the aid of one of these inferior clergy was almost invariably sought by all who could procure a dog and a fowl for the necessary sacrifice to the god, and a piece or two of cloth as a fee for the priest. But the offerings to the god and the fees to the priest naturally varied with the rank or wealth of the sufferer. After sacrificing the victims the priest lay down to sleep, and if his prayers were answered, he was usually able to inform the invalid of the cause of his illness, which had been revealed to him in a dream. But the same men, who could thus heal the sick by ascertaining and removing the cause of sickness, were supposed to possess the power of praying or enchanting people to death by the recitation of spells or incantations. The prayers or incantations which they employed for these beneficent or maleficent purposes varied with the individual: every practitioner had his own formulas, the knowledge of which he carefully confined to his own family; and he who was thought to have most influence with his god was most frequently employed by the people and derived the greatest emoluments from his profession.[1] Of this class of men the most dreaded were those who invoked the god Uli as their patron deity. Their special business was to kill people by their spells, which they recited secretly, and for the most part by night; but to render these effectual it was necessary for them to obtain some of the personal refuse of their victim, such as his spittle, the parings of his nails, or the clippings of his hair, which they buried or burned with the appropriate incantations.[2] Hence the king of Hawaii was constantly attended by a servant carrying a spittoon in which he collected the royal saliva

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 293-295. Compare U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* pp. 120 *sq.*; A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 171 *sqq.*; C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 202 *sq.*; Tyerman and Bennett, *op. cit.* i. 414; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 36 *sq.*, 71 *sq.*; A. Marcuse, *op. cit.* pp. 103-105.

[2] A. Marcuse, *op. cit.* p. 104.

to prevent it from being used by the king's enemies for his injury or destruction.[1] Ordinary chiefs seem to have adopted the same precaution; a confidential servant deposited their spittle carefully in a portable spittoon and buried it every morning.[2]

A form of divination or magic was employed to detect a thief. The person who had suffered the loss used to apply to a priest, to whom he presented a pig and told his story. Thereupon the priest kindled a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together, and having taken three nuts he broke the shells and threw one of the kernels into the fire, saying, "Kill or shoot the fellow." If the thief did not appear before the nut was consumed in the flames, the priest repeated the ceremony with the other two nuts. Such was the fear inspired by this rite that the culprit seldom failed to come forward and acknowledge his guilt. But if he persisted in concealing his crime, the king would cause proclamation to be made throughout the island that so-and-so had been robbed, and that the robber or robbers had been prayed to death. So firm was the belief of the people in the power of these prayers, that the criminal, on hearing the proclamation, would pine away, refuse food, and fall a victim to his own credulity.[3]

§ 7. *Temples, Images, Human Sacrifices*

Of the Hawaiian temples, as they existed before the abolition of the native religion, we seem to possess no good and clear description. When Captain Cook first visited Hawaii and was sailing along the coast, he noticed from the ship at every village one or more elevated white objects, like pyramids or rather obelisks; one of them he judged to be fifty feet high. On landing to examine it, he could not reach it on account of an intervening pool of water. However, he visited another structure of the same sort in a more accessible situation, and found that it stood in what he calls a burying-ground or *morai* closely resembling those

[1] O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits* (London, 1821), i. 313.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* i. 365.

[3] A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 171-173.

which he had seen in other Polynesian islands and especially in Tahiti. This particular *morai* was an oblong space, of considerable extent, surrounded by a wall of stone, about four feet high. The area enclosed was loosely paved with smaller stones; and at one end of it stood the pyramid or obelisk, measuring about four feet square at the base and about twenty feet high. The four sides were composed, not of stones, but of small poles interwoven with twigs and branches, thus forming an indifferent wicker-work, hollow or open within from bottom to top. It seemed to be in a rather ruinous state, but enough remained to show that it had been originally covered with the light grey cloth to which the natives attached a religious significance. It was no doubt with similar cloth that the white pyramids or obelisks were covered which Captain Cook beheld in the distance from the deck of his ship. Beside the particular pyramid which he examined Captain Cook found a sacrificial stage or altar with plantains laid upon it. The pyramids or obelisks which he thus saw and described were presumably the structures in which the priests concealed themselves when they gave oracles in the name of the god. On the farther side of the area of the *morai* of which Captain Cook has given us a description stood a house or shed about ten feet high, forty feet long, and ten broad in the middle, but tapering somewhat towards the ends. The entrance into it was at the middle of the side, which was in the *morai*. On the farther side of the house, opposite the entrance, stood two wooden images, each cut out of a single piece, with pedestals, in all about three feet high, not badly designed nor executed. They were said to represent goddesses (*eatooa no veheina*). On the head of one of them was a carved helmet, and on the other a cylindrical cap like the head-dress worn at Tahiti. In the middle of the house, and before the two images, was an oblong space, enclosed by a low edging of stone and covered with shreds of the same grey cloth which draped the pyramid or obelisk. Within this enclosure seven chiefs lay buried; and outside the house, just on one side of the entrance, were two small square spaces in which a man and a hog were buried respectively, after being killed and sacrificed to the divinity. At a little distance from these,

and near the middle of the *morai*, were three more of these square enclosed places, in which three chiefs had been interred. In front of their graves was an oblong enclosed space in which, as Captain Cook was told, three human victims were buried, each of them having been sacrificed at the funeral of one of the three chiefs. Within the area of the *morai* or burying-ground, as Captain Cook calls it, were planted trees of various kinds. Similar sanctuaries appeared to Captain Cook to abound in the island; the particular one described by him he believed to be among the least considerable, being far less conspicuous than several others which he had seen in sailing along the coast.[1]

From his description we may infer that the temples (*morais*) observed by him did not contain stone pyramids like those which formed such prominent features in the Tahitian sanctuaries and in the burial grounds of the Tooitongas in Tongataboo; for the pyramids, or rather obelisks, of wicker-work seen by Captain Cook in the Hawaiian sanctuaries were obviously structures of a wholly different kind. But there seem to be some grounds for thinking that stone pyramids, built in steps or terraces, did occur in some of the Hawaiian temples. Thus Captain King saw a *morai*, as he calls it, which consisted of a square solid pile of stones about forty yards long, twenty broad, and fourteen [feet?] in height. The top was flat and well paved, and surrounded by a wooden rail, on which were fixed the skulls of captives who had been sacrificed on the death of chiefs. The ascent to the top of the pile was easy, but whether it was a staircase or an inclined plane is not mentioned by Captain King. At one end of the temple or sacred enclosure was an irregular kind of scaffold supported on poles more than twenty feet high, at the foot of which were twelve images ranged in a semicircle with a sacrificial table or altar in front of them. On the scaffold Captain Cook was made to stand, and there, swathed in red cloth, he received the adoration of the natives, who offered him a hog and chanted a long litany in his honour.[2]

[1] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vi. 183-187. The cloth-covered pyramid or obelisk was called a *henananoo* (*ib.* p. 187).

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 5-7.

When Kamehameha was busy conquering the archipelago in the last years of the eighteenth century, he built a great temple (*heiau*) for his war-god Tairi in the island of Hawaii. Some thirty years later the ruined temple was visited and described by the missionary William Ellis. He says: "Its shape is an irregular parallelogram, 224 feet long, and 100 wide. The walls, though built of loose stones, were solid and compact. At both ends, and on the side next the mountains, they were twenty feet high, twelve feet thick at the bottom, but narrowed in gradually towards the top, where a course of smooth stones, six feet wide, formed a pleasant walk. The walls next the sea were not more than seven or eight feet high, and were proportionally wide. The entrance to the temple is by a narrow passage between two high walls. . . . The upper terrace within the area was spacious, and much better finished than the lower ones. It was paved with flat smooth stones, brought from a distance. At the south end was a kind of inner court, which might be called the sanctum sanctorum of the temple, where the principal idol used to stand, surrounded by a number of images of inferior deities. . . . On the outside, near the entrance to the inner court, was the place of the *rere* (altar) on which human and other sacrifices were offered. The remains of one of the pillars that supported it were pointed out by the natives, and the pavement around was strewed with bones of men and animals, the mouldering remains of those numerous offerings once presented there. About the centre of the terrace was the spot where the king's sacred house stood, in which he resided during the season of strict *tabu*, and at the north end, the place occupied by the houses of priests, who, with the exception of the king, were the only persons permitted to dwell within the sacred enclosures. Holes were seen on the walls, all around this, as well as the lower terraces, where wooden idols of varied size and shape formerly stood, casting their hideous stare in every direction."[1]

From this somewhat indistinct description we gather that the temple was a large oblong area enclosed by high stone walls and open to the sky, and that at some place

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 96-98. Compare J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 45 *sq.*

within the enclosure there rose a structure in a series of terraces, of which the uppermost was paved with flat stones and supported the king's house, while the houses of the priests stood in another part of the sacred enclosure. If this interpretation is correct, we may infer that the temple resembled a Tahitian *morai*, which was a walled enclosure enclosing a sort of stepped and truncated pyramid built of stone.[1] The inference is confirmed by the language used by Captain King in speaking of the temple which he describes, for he calls it a *morai*,[2] and the same term is applied to the sacred edifices in Hawaii by other voyagers.[3]

Another ruined temple (*heiau*) seen by Ellis in Hawaii, is described by him as built of immense blocks of lava, and measuring a hundred and fifty feet long by seventy feet wide. At the north end was a smaller enclosure, sixty feet long and ten wide, partitioned off by a high wall, with but one narrow entrance. The places where the idols formerly stood were apparent, though the idols had been removed. The spot where the altar had been erected could be distinctly traced ; it was a mound of earth, paved with smooth stones, and surrounded by a firm curb of lava. The adjacent ground was strewn with bones of the ancient offerings.[4] Another temple (*heiau*), in good preservation, visited by Ellis, measured no less than two hundred and seventy feet in one direction by two hundred and ten in another. The walls were thick and solid ; on the top of them the stones were piled in a series of small spires. The temple was said to have been built by a queen of Hawaii about eleven generations back.[5] Once more in one of the *puhonuas* or cities of refuge, which in Hawaii afforded an inviolable sanctuary to fugitives, Ellis saw another temple (*heiau*), which he describes as "a compact pile of stones, laid up in a solid mass, 126 feet by 65, and ten feet high. Many fragments of rock, or pieces of lava, of two or more tons each, were seen in several parts of the wall, raised at least six feet from the ground." Ellis was told that the city of refuge, of which this temple formed part, had been built for Keave, who reigned in Hawaii about

[1] See above, pp. 278 *sqq.*

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 5.

[3] O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 89 *sq.*; A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, p. 175.

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 116.

[5] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 117 *sq.*

two hundred and fifty years before the time when the missionary was writing.[1] From his descriptions we may infer that some at least of the Hawaiian temples deserved to rank among megalithic structures, and that the natives had definite traditions of the kings or queens by whom the temples had been built.

In the island of Oahu a temple (*heiau*) visited by the missionary Stewart was forty yards long by twenty yards broad. The walls, of dark stone, were perfectly regular and well built, about six feet high, three feet wide at the level of the ground, and two feet wide at the top. It was enclosed only on three sides, the oblong area formed by the walls being open on the west; from that side there was a descent by three regular terraces or very broad steps.[2] This brief account confirms the inference which I have drawn from the more detailed description of Ellis, as to the terraced structure of some Hawaiian temples.

In the mountains of Hawaii, at a height of about five thousand feet above the sea, Commodore Wilkes saw the ruins of an ancient temple of the god Kaili (Tairi), round about which stood eight small pyramids built of compact blocks of lava laid without cement. These pyramids were said to have been erected at the command of Umi, an ancient king, to commemorate his conquests. They seem to have measured each some ten or twelve feet square. The temple which they surrounded was about ninety-two feet long by seventy-two feet wide; the outer walls were about seven feet high and as many thick. Internally the edifice was divided by partition walls three feet high. The building was said to have been formerly covered with idols, of which no traces remained at the time of Wilkes's visit.[3]

Often, apparently, a Hawaiian temple consisted of little more than a walled or palisaded enclosure containing a number of rudely carved images and a place of sacrifice in the form of a platform raised on poles. Such a temple is described by the Russian navigator Lisiansky. The images in it were grouped and arranged so as to form a sort of

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 169.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 226 *sq.*

[3] Ch. Wilkes, *op. cit.* iv. 99 *sq.*, with the plate.

semicircle. The chief priest of the temple informed the Russians "that the fifteen statues wrapped in cloth represented the gods of war; the two to the right of the place of sacrifice, the gods of spring; those on the opposite side, the guardians of autumn; and that the altar was dedicated to the god of joy, before which the islanders dance and sing on festivals appointed by their religion." With regard to the temples in general, Lisiansky observes that they "were by no means calculated to excite in the mind of a stranger religious veneration. They are suffered to remain in so neglected and filthy a condition, that, were it not for the statues, they might be taken rather for hog-sties than places of worship."[1]

The images of the gods were usually carved of wood. When a new idol was to be made, a royal and priestly procession went forth, with great ceremony, to the destined tree, where the king himself, with a stone axe, struck the first blow at the root. After the tree was felled, a man or a hog was killed and buried on the spot where it had grown.[2] Sometimes, apparently, the direction to carve an idol out of a particular tree was given by a god in a dream. There is a tradition that once when the woodmen were felling such a tree with their stone axes, the chips flew out and killed two of them; whereupon the other woodmen covered their faces with masks, and cut down the tree with their daggers.[3] Another famous idol was said to be made of wood so poisonous, that if chips of it were steeped in water, and anybody drank of the water, he would die in less than twenty-four hours.[4] The Hawaiians seem to have made

[1] U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* pp. 105-107. He says (p. 106) that the temple was "called by the natives *Heavoo*, not *Morai*, as some navigators have said." The word *Heavoo* is probably identical with the word *heiau*, which other writers give as the Hawaiian name for a temple. As to the form of the temples see also A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 175 *sq.*: "Their Morais, or places of worship, consist of one large house or temple, with some smaller ones round it, in which are the images of their inferior gods. The tabooed or consecrated precincts are marked out by four square posts, which stand thirty or forty yards from the building. In the inside of the principal house there is a screen or curtain of white cloth, hung across one end within which the image of Etooah [*atua*, *akua*] is placed." Remy (*op. cit.* p. xl) describes the Hawaiian temples as "simple enclosures of stones, roofless, where the religious ceremonies were performed."

[2] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 450.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 92 *sq.*

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 91.

their idols hideous on purpose to inspire terror.[1] The features of some of the images were violently distorted, their mouths set with a double row of the fangs of dogs, their eyes made of large pearl oysters with black nuts in the middle; some had long pieces of carved wood, shaped like inverted cones, rising from the top of their heads;[2] some had tongues of a monstrous size, others had no tongues at all; some had mouths that reached from ear to ear; the heads of some were a great deal larger than their bodies.[3] Some of the idols were stones. In the island of Hawaii there is a pebbly beach from which pebbles used to be carried away to be deified or to represent deities. They were generally taken in couples, a male and a female, and having been wrapt up very carefully together in a piece of native cloth, they were conveyed to a temple (*heiau*), where ceremonies of consecration or deification were performed over them.[4]

The human sacrifice offered at the making of an idol was intended to impart strength to the image.[5] But human sacrifices were offered on many other occasions, such as on the approach of war, on the death of a chief, and so forth. There is a tradition that Umi, a famous king of Hawaii, once offered eighty men to his god as a thank-offering for victory. The victims were generally prisoners of war, but in default of captives any men who had broken taboos or rendered themselves obnoxious to the chiefs were sacrificed. It does not appear that they were slain in the presence of the idol or within the temple, but either on the outside or where they were first taken; in all cases an attempt seems to have been made to preserve the body entire or as little mangled as possible. Generally the victims were despatched by a blow on the head with a club or stone; sometimes, however, they were stabbed. Having been stripped naked, the bodies were carried into the temple and laid in a row, with their faces downwards, on the altar immediately before the idol. The priest thereupon, in a kind of prayer, offered them to the gods; and if hogs were sacrificed at the same

[1] A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 101.

[2] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 6, 15; compare A. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 76.

[3] U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 107.

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 212 *sq.*

[5] J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. 161.

time, they were afterwards piled on the human bodies and left there to rot and putrefy together.[1]

When a new temple was about to be dedicated, some of the people used to flee into the mountains to escape being sacrificed. The last human sacrifices are said to have been offered in 1807, when the queen of the islands was seriously ill.[2] Whenever war was in contemplation, the diviners used to sacrifice animals, generally hogs and fowls, and to draw omens from the manner in which they expired, from the appearance of their entrails, and from other signs. Sometimes, when the animal was slain, they disembowelled it, took out the spleen, and, holding it in their hands, offered their prayers. But if the contemplated expedition was of any importance or the danger was imminent, human sacrifices were offered to ensure the co-operation of the war-gods in the destruction of their enemies.[3]

§ 8. *Festivals*

In every lunar month the people celebrated four festivals. The festival of the new moon lasted three nights and two days; the three others lasted two nights and one day. These nights and days were taboo or sacred: men who took part in the festivals might not speak to a woman under pain of death, and all the people were forbidden to sail the sea, to fish, to make bark-cloth, and to play games.[4] Besides these monthly festivals there was one called Macahity, which lasted for a whole month and seems to have celebrated the end of the old year. It fell in November, and has been compared by Lisiansky to our festival of Christmas. He tells us that "it continues a whole month, during which the people amuse themselves with dances, plays, and sham-fights of every kind. The king must open this festival wherever he is. On this occasion, his majesty dresses himself in his richest cloak and helmet, and is paddled in a canoe along

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 150-152; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 47 *sq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. xl *sq.* Compare U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* pp. 121 *sq.*; Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 423 *sq.*

[2] A. Marcuse, *op. cit.* p. 103.

[3] W. Ellis, iv. 150 *sq.*

[4] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 595. Compare U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, p. 118. According to the latter writer, there were no taboos (festivals) in the eleventh month.

the shore, followed sometimes by many of his subjects. He embarks early, and must finish his excursion at sun-rise. The strongest and most expert of the warriors is chosen to receive him on his landing. This warrior watches the royal canoe along the beach; and as soon as the king lands, and has thrown off his cloak, he darts his spear at him, from a distance of about thirty paces, and the king must either catch the spear in his hand, or suffer from it: there is no jesting in the business. Having caught it, he carries it under his arm, with the sharp end downwards, into the temple or *heavoo*. On his entrance, the assembled multitude begin their sham-fights, and immediately the air is obscured by clouds of spears, made for the occasion with blunted ends. Hamamea [the king, Kamehameha] has been frequently advised to abolish this ridiculous ceremony, in which he risks his life every year; but to no effect. His answer always is, that he is as able to catch a spear, as any one on the island is to throw it at him. During the Macahity, all punishments are remitted throughout the country; and no person can leave the place in which he commences these holidays, let the affair requiring his absence be ever so important."[1] The ceremony of throwing a spear at the king during the festival of Macahity has been described also by the Scotch sailor Archibald Campbell, who may have witnessed it. He says: "The king remains in the *morai* for the whole period; before entering it, a singular ceremony takes place. He is obliged to stand till three spears are darted at him: he must catch the first with his hand, and with it ward off the other two. This is not a mere formality. The spear is thrown with the utmost force; and should the king lose his life, there is no help for it."[2] This curious rite may perhaps have been a relic of an old custom which obliged the king to submit once a year to the ordeal of battle, in order to prove his fitness for a

[1] U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 118 *sq.* From A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, p. 178, we learn that the festival fell in November, and from a brief native notice we may gather that the New Year celebration was the festival of Macahity. See J. Remy, *Histoire de l'Archipel Havaiien*, pp. 167, 169, "*à la célébration de la nouvelle année, les citoyens, les chefs, les femmes, les enfants se livraient à des boxes furieuses, et plusieurs recevaient dans ces jeux des blessures très graves.*"

[2] A. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 179.

renewed tenure of office, death being the penalty of defeat and the kingdom the reward of victory in the combat.[1] During the continuance of the festival the priests were employed in collecting the taxes, which were paid by the chiefs in proportion to the extent of their territories; these taxes consisted of mats, feathers, and the produce of the country. The people celebrated the festival by dancing, wrestling, and other amusements.[2] The victor in the boxing matches and martial evolutions was crowned and treated as king of the festival, which was held in honour of the god Rono.[3]

No one might go to war during the New Year festival; all the people had to repair to the temples (*morais*). Three kinds of idols were worshipped at this season; the principal of them, called Kekou-Aroha, was carried round the island by a priest; everything that he could seize with his left hand he had the right to appropriate, whether it was dogs, pigs, vegetables, or what not; and any person on whom he in like manner laid a hand was bound to assist him in carrying or leading to the temple the tribute or booty he had thus taken possession of.[4]

Of the rigour with which the laws of taboo were enforced during one of these festivals we may gather an idea from a statement of the Russian navigator von Kotzebue. He says: "As Kareimoku's guests, we were present at the celebration of a *Tabu pori*, which lasted from the setting of the sun to sunrise on the third day. It is already known what degree of sanctity is imparted to him who joins in this communion with the gods during the time. Should he accidentally touch a woman, she must be instantly put to death. Should he enter a woman's house, the flames must immediately consume it." [5]

[1] Compare *The Golden Bough*, Part III. *The Dying God*, pp. 117 *sq.*

[2] A. Campbell, *op. cit.* pp. 178 *sq.*

[3] O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 88 *sq.*

[4] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 596.

[5] O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits*, iii. 248 *sq.* Compare A. von Chamisso, *Reise um die Welt* (Leipzig, 1836), ii. 312.

§ 9. *Death and Funeral Rites*

The Hawaiians explained life as usual by the hypothesis of a soul (*uhane*), which animated the whole body, but had its seat especially in the sockets of the eyes, and above all in the lachrymal gland. During sleep the soul quits the body, wanders away, and sees the places and things which appear to it in dreams; usually it returns in time to resume its functions in the body without endangering the health of the sleeper. Occasionally, however, it happens that in its rambles it loses its way through falling in with a ghost or spectre, who frightens it; but even then it may be brought back with the help of a familiar spirit despatched to seek out and guide home the wanderer. When a man falls sick, his soul begins to feel ill at ease in his body, and if the sickness proves fatal, the soul quits him never to return.[1] According to another account, the Hawaiians held that every man had two souls in his body, of which one never left him in life, while the other went forth from time to time in dreams or ecstasy, but only to return to its corporeal tabernacle. Sometimes a diviner would warn a man that he had seen his dream-soul roaming about, and that perhaps it might never come back, because a certain deity was angry with him. Upon that the terrified owner of the soul would naturally engage the diviner to recover his spiritual property by propitiating the angry deity with a valuable offering.[2]

Sickness was commonly explained by the presence in the sufferer of an evil spirit, who must be exorcised if the patient was to be restored to health. For this purpose the services of a priest (*kahuna*) were engaged, who by the recitation of a suitable incantation invited or compelled the demon to declare through the mouth of the sick man why he had entered into him, and on what terms he would consent to take his departure. Sometimes, the demon was induced to perch on the head or shoulders of one of the

[1] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, pp. 272 *sq.*

[2] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 39 note; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 105.

bystanders, and from that coign of vantage to answer the interrogatory of the priest. But at other times he burrowed so deep into the patient's body and held his tongue so obstinately, that the priest had no alternative but to prick the sick man's body with bamboo needles and to drop water into his eyes in order to drive out the evil spirit.[1]

When all remedies had proved vain and death had followed, the bodies of common people were buried in a crouching position. The upper part of the body was raised; the face was bent forwards to meet the knees; the hands were put under the hams and passed up between the knees; then head, hands, and knees were bound together with cinnet or cord. Afterwards the corpse was wrapt up in a coarse mat and interred on the first or second day after death. But the corpses of chiefs and priests were not thus doubled up; they were laid out straight, wrapt up in many folds of native cloth, and buried in that posture. Priests were generally committed to the earth within the precincts of the temple in which they had officiated. A pile of stones or a circle of high poles marked their grave. But it was only the bodies of priests or of persons of some importance that were thus interred. For ordinary people natural graves were preferred, where suitable places could be found, such as caves in the face of cliffs or large subterranean grottos. Sometimes the inhabitants of a village deposited their dead in one great cavern, but generally each family had a distinct sepulchral cave. Their artificial graves were either simple pits dug in the earth or large enclosures, which might be surrounded with high stone walls so as to resemble the ordinary temples (*heiaus*). Occasionally they buried their dead in sequestered spots near their dwellings, but often in their gardens, and sometimes in their houses. The graves were not deep, and the bodies were usually placed in them in a sitting posture.[2] A rude method of embalming by means of the flower of the sugar-cane was often practised, whereby the entrails and brains were extracted and the body desiccated.[3] When the dead was interred in the dwelling,

[1] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 269.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 359 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 73 *sq.*

[3] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 73; J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xlvii.

the house was not uncommonly shut up and deserted, the survivors seeking for themselves a new habitation.[1] The custom no doubt sprang from a fear of the ghosts, which were supposed to linger about their final resting-places and to injure such as came within their reach; hence their apparitions were much dreaded. For the same reason burials were conducted in a private manner and by night. If people were seen carrying a dead body past a house, the inmates would abuse or even stone them for not taking it some other way; for they imagined that the ghost would ply to and fro between the grave and his old home along the path by which his corpse had been carried.[2] Sometimes, apparently, to prevent the ghost from straying, his grave was enclosed by a sort of fence composed of long poles stuck in the ground at intervals of three or four inches and fastened together at the top. At all events Ellis saw a priest's tomb thus enclosed, and he received this explanation of the fence from some people; though others merely said that it was a custom so to inter persons of consequence.[3] Nightmare was believed to be caused by a ghost attempting to strangle the dreamer; under the influence of this belief a strong man has been seen to run shrieking down the street, tugging with both hands at his throat to tear the incubus away, till he reached the door of a neighbour's house and, bursting in, fell fainting on the floor. He thought that the ghost of a chief, who had died the day before, had a grip on his throat and was trying to throttle him.[4] Sometimes, however, affection for the dead sufficed to overcome the fear of the ghost, and the mouldering bones were carried about as relics by relations and friends.[5] When the Scotch sailor Archibald Campbell was in the islands in the early years of the nineteenth century, his patroness the queen kept by her the bones of her father wrapt up in a piece of cloth. Whenever she slept in her own house, the bones were placed by her side; in her absence they were

[1] Tyerman and Bennet, *op. cit.* i. 429.

[2] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 360 *sq.*; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 74; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inslen*, p. 109.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 129.

[4] H. T. Cheever, *Life in the Sandwich Islands* (London, 1851), pp. 11 *sq.*, quoting Sheldon Dibble, *History of the Sandwich Islands*, p. 99.

[5] O. von Kotzebue, *Neue Reise um die Welt*, ii. 98; A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 261.

set on a feather-bed which she had received from the captain of a ship, and which she used only for this purpose. On being asked by the Scotchman why she observed this singular custom, she replied that it was because she loved her father so dearly.[1] More usually, however, the bones of a beloved chief were carefully hidden to prevent his enemies from finding them and making arrow-heads out of them, with which to hunt rats, or otherwise profaning them. Hence there was a proverb to the effect that the bones of bad chiefs were not concealed. When the great King Kamehameha died in 1819, his bones were hidden and disappeared completely in some secret cave.[2]

The death of a king or great chief in former days was the occasion for the observance of some singular ceremonies and customs. The grief, real or pretended, of the people found expression in many extravagant forms. Men and women knocked out some of their front teeth with stones; but the custom seems to have been observed even more extensively by men than by women. The kinsmen or friends of the deceased chief set the example, and their retainers were obliged to imitate them. Sometimes a man broke out his own tooth with a stone, but more usually the service was rendered him by another, who fixed one end of a stick against the tooth and hammered the stick with a stone till the tooth broke off. If the men deferred the operation, the women would perform it on them in their sleep. More than one tooth was seldom sacrificed at one time; but as the mutilation was repeated at the decease of every chief of rank or authority, few men of mature years were to be seen with a whole set of teeth, and many lost all their front teeth both in the upper and the lower jaw. Another mutilation practised at such times was to cut one or both ears, but it seems to have been comparatively rare. Much commoner was the custom of burning circles or semi-circles on the face or breast by means of strips of burning bark. The mourners also polled their hair in various ways. Sometimes they made bald a small round piece on the crown of the head, like the tonsure of Catholic priests;

[1] A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 206 *sq.*
[2] J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. 153.

sometimes they shaved or cropped close the whole head except round the edge, where a short fringe was left to hang down; sometimes they made their heads quite bald on one side and allowed the hair to remain long on the other; occasionally they cut out a patch in the shape of a horse-shoe either at the back of the head or above the forehead; sometimes they shore a number of curved furrows from ear to ear or from the forehead to the neck. When a chief who had lost a relative or friend had his own hair cut after any particular pattern, his followers and dependants usually cropped their hair in the same style. Not to clip or shave the hair in mourning was regarded as disrespectful to the dead, but the particular manner of cutting it was left to the taste of the individual.[1] Some people in their frenzy knocked out their eyes with clubs and stones and cut as well as burned their flesh.[2] Another peculiar badge of mourning, adopted principally by the chiefs, was a black spot or line tattooed on the tongue. The painful operation was performed by puncturing the tongue with sharp fish-bones dipped in colouring matter.[3] But though these personal mutilations were popular and almost universal on the decease of chiefs, they appear not to have been practised by the common people among themselves. Thus a wife did not knock out her teeth on the death of her husband, and a son did not thus express his grief for the loss of his parents, nor they for the death of a child.[4]

Similar extravagances in the expression of grief were commonly exhibited by mourners, as we have seen, in other parts of Polynesia; but in Hawaii the rites observed at the death of a king or high chief were in so far peculiar that they assumed the character of a Saturnalia or orgy of unbridled lust and crime. On this subject the Russian navigator Lisiansky, who visited the islands while the ancient system of superstition was still in full vogue, reports as follows: "On the death of the king, a scene of horror takes place that is hardly credible. Twelve men are

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 175 *sqq.*, 181. Compare U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 123; A. Campbell, *op. cit.* pp. 142 *sq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xlvii.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 166; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 65 *sq.*

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 177, 180 *sq.*

[4] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 180.

sacrificed; and shortly after the whole island abandons itself for a month to the utmost disorder and licentiousness. During this period, both sexes go entirely naked, and men cohabit with women without any distinction: the woman who should dare to make resistance, would be considered as violating the laws of the country. The same licentiousness is observed on the death of a noble; but it does not extend beyond the domains of the deceased, and is of a much shorter duration, not continuing, as Mr. Young informed me, more than a few days, though attempts are made by the youth of the party to prolong the period. Those who are put to death on the demise of the king, or any great personage, are such as have offered themselves for the purpose during the life of their master; and they are in consequence considered and treated by him as his best friends, since they have sworn to live and die with him. When I reflect upon the horrid nature of this ceremony, I hardly know how to credit its existence amongst a race of men so mild and good as these islanders in general appear to be; but Mr. Young, whose veracity I had no reason to doubt, assured me of the fact." [1]

This John Young, who gave Lisiansky information as to the customs and religion of the Hawaiians, was an Englishman who had resided in the islands for many years at the time of the Russian navigator's visit in 1804. Originally a sailor, born at Liverpool, he had been compulsorily detained by the natives when he landed from his ship in Hawaii in March 1790. But from the first he received the kindest treatment from the king, Kamehameha, whose full confidence and high esteem he enjoyed and deserved. The king gave him a fine estate and appointed him to several responsible offices; in particular Young was governor of Hawaii for no less than nine years during the king's absence. He married a native woman of rank, by whom he had six children. While he remained warmly attached to his native country and rendered essential services to English vessels touching at the islands, he remained a voluntary exile for forty-five years in Hawaii, where he died at the patriarchal age of ninety-two in December 1835.

[1] U. Lisiansky, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 122 *sq.*

During this long period he enjoyed the favour of the kings, chiefs, and people, and was highly respected and esteemed for his intelligence and good offices by European voyagers to the islands.[1] Thus he had the best opportunities for acquainting himself with the customs and beliefs of the natives, and it is much to be regretted that of the ample store of knowledge which he thus acquired nothing remains but a few scattered notices recorded by travellers to whom he had verbally communicated them.

In 1809, some five years after Lisiansky's visit to Hawaii, the Scotch sailor Archibald Campbell witnessed one of these Saturnalia held on the occasion of the death of the king's brother. He says: "The public mourning that took place on this occasion was of so extraordinary a nature that had I not been an eye-witness, I could not have given credit to it. The natives cut out their hair, and went about completely naked. Many of them, particularly the women, disfigured themselves, by knocking out their front teeth, and branding their faces with red-hot stones, and the small end of calabashes, which they held burning to their faces till a circular mark was produced; whilst, at the same time, a general, I believe I may say an universal, public prostitution of the women took place. The queens, and the widow of the deceased, were alone exempted. When the captain of a ship that lay in the harbour remonstrated with the king upon these disgraceful scenes, he answered, that such was the law, and he could not prevent them."[2]

To these enormities the French navigator L. de Freycinet bore similar testimony a few years later. He says: "The despair which is affected after the loss of royal personages or great nobles presents also a remarkable resemblance to what takes place under similar circumstances among the inhabitants of the Marianne Islands. When we landed in Owhyhi [Hawaii], signs of sorrow everywhere presented themselves to our eyes and witnessed to the excesses that had been committed at the recent death of Tamehameha. At

[1] G. Vancouver, *Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and round the World* (London, 1798), ii. 135 *sq.*; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 96; Tyerman and Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, i. 377 *sq.*; F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage*, i. 238 *sq.*

[2] A. Campbell, *Voyage round the World*, pp. 142 *sq.*

such a crisis anarchy displays all its horrors: the laws and the rules of taboo are broken without shame: the prohibited foods are devoured without scruple, chiefly by the women: the rights of property are ignored; force becomes the supreme law: the voice of chiefs is powerless: old enmities are avenged by blood or pillage: in a word, incredible scenes of disorder, of cruelty, and of lust are everywhere renewed under the stimulus of impunity. Calm does not begin to reign again until the heir is definitely invested with the royal power. Such is the mode in which the common people, freed for the moment from all restraint, express the grief which they are supposed to feel at the death of their sovereign."[1]

The early missionaries to Hawaii also testified to the disorders which prevailed on these occasions, though they seem not to have witnessed them. From their accounts we gather that at such times the rights of property were as little respected as the chastity of women. "On such an occasion," says Stewart, "every restraint was cast off, and all were in the habit of following the impulse of any and every wild passion that might seize them. Rights of person or of property were no longer regarded; and he who had the greatest muscular powers committed whatever depredation he chose, and injured any one he thought proper. Even the chiefs lost their ordinary pre-eminence, and could exert no influence of restraint on the excesses of their subjects. It was the time of redressing private wrongs, by committing violence on the property and person of an enemy; and everything that any one possessed was liable to be taken from him. Their grief was expressed by the most shocking personal outrages, not only by tearing off their clothes entirely, but by knocking out their eyes and teeth with clubs and stones, and pulling out their hair, and by burning and cutting their flesh; while drunkenness, riot, and every species of debauchery continued to be indulged in for days after the death of the deceased."[2] To the same effect Ellis writes that "as soon as the chief had expired, the whole neighbourhood exhibited a scene of confusion, wickedness, and cruelty, seldom witnessed even in the most barbarous society.

[1] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 602.

[2] C. S. Stewart, *Residence in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 165 *sq.*

The people ran to and fro without their clothes, appearing and acting more like demons than human beings; every vice was practised, and almost every species of crime perpetrated. Houses were burnt, property plundered, even murder sometimes committed, and the gratification of every base and savage feeling sought without restraint. Injuries or accidents, long forgotten perhaps by the offending party, were now revenged with unrelenting cruelty."[1] According to Jarves, the early historian of Hawaii, on these occasions no women were exempt from violation except the widows of the deceased.[2]

Such outbursts of passion, released from all restraints of custom or law, are not unknown elsewhere on the occasion of a death. Among the Ba-ila of Northern Rhodesia it is customary at funerals for the women to sing lewd songs. "Under ordinary circumstances it would be reckoned taboo for women to utter such things in the presence of men; but at funerals all restraints are removed. People do as they like. Grass may be plucked out of the thatched roofs; the fields may be robbed of the growing corn; all passions are let loose; and no complaint for damage, theft, or adultery can be made. This last item used to be the case; nowadays fines are claimed."[3]

The number of human victims sacrificed at the death of a chief varied with his rank. For a king of Hawaii the general number would seem to have been ten or twelve.[4] But when King Kamehameha died in 1819, the priest declared somewhat differently the custom in regard to human sacrifice on such an occasion. When the corpse had been removed from the king's own dwelling to a consecrated house for the performance of the proper rites, a sacred hog was baked and offered to it by the priest; for the dead king was now deemed to be a god. Then addressing the chiefs and the new king, the priest spoke as follows: "I will now make known to you the rules to be observed respecting persons to be sacrificed on the burial of his body. If you obtain one

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 177.

[2] J. J. Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands*, p. 66. Compare J. Remy, *op. cit.* p. xlvii.

[3] E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1920), ii. 113 *sq.*

[4] J. Cook, *Voyages*, vii. 145; U. Lisiansky, *op. cit.* p. 122.

man before the corpse is removed, one will be sufficient; but after it leaves this house four will be required. If delayed until we carry the corpse to the grave, there must be ten; but after it is deposited in the grave, there must be fifteen. To-morrow morning there will be a tabu, and if the sacrifice be delayed until that time, forty men must die." However, on this occasion, no human blood was shed, but three hundred dogs were sacrificed.[1] The victims who were killed at the death of the king, princes, and distinguished chiefs, and were buried with their remains, belonged to the lowest class of society. In certain families the obligation of dying with the different members of such or such a noble house was hereditary, so that at the birth of a child it was known at whose death he must be sacrificed. The victims knew their destiny, and their lot seems to have had no terror for them.[2]

At Honaunau, in the island of Hawaii, there was a sort of mausoleum in which the bones of dead kings and princes were deposited. For some reason it was spared in the general destruction of pagan monuments which took place in 1819, and it was still almost intact when the missionary Ellis visited and described it a few years later. It was a compact building, twenty-four feet long by sixteen feet wide, built of the most durable timber, and thatched with leaves. It stood on a bed of lava jutting out into the sea, and was surrounded by a strong fence, leaving a paved area in front and at the two ends. Several rudely carved male and female images of wood were placed on the outside of the enclosure, some on low pedestals under the shade of a tree, others on high posts planted on the jutting rocks which overhung the edge of the water. A number of effigies stood on the fence at unequal distances all around; but the principal assemblage of idols was at the south-east end of the enclosed space, where twelve of them stood in a semicircle on a crescent-shaped basement of stone raised about two feet above the pavement. Some of them rested on small pedestals, others on pillars eight or ten feet high.

[1] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* pp. 189, 190. Compare J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. 125, 127; H. Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-one Years in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 71.

[2] O. von Kotzebue, *Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits* (London, 1821), iii. 247.

The principal idol, distinguished by the variety and superiority of the carving on its body and especially on its head, stood in the middle, the others on either side of it, "as if perpetual guardians of 'the mighty dead' reposing in the house adjoining."[1]

When a death had taken place, the house in which it occurred, was deemed defiled, and continued in that state until after the burial. But if the deceased was a chief, the whole land was polluted, and the heirs sought a residence in another part of the country, until the corpse was dissected and the bones tied in a bundle; for when that was done the season of defilement terminated. Hence on the death of King Kamehameha, his son and successor, Liholiho, had to retire for a time to another district.[2]

§ 10. *Fate of the Soul after Death*

The Hawaiians in general believed that the human soul exists after death, but their notions on the subject were, as usual, vague, confused, and contradictory. Some said that all the souls of the departed went to the Po, or place of night, and were there annihilated or eaten by the gods.[3] According to another account, the souls of the dead that had no claim to divinity fluttered about their old homes till the moment arrived when they became the food of the gods. It is not certain, adds de Freycinet, that they recognised the immortality of the soul in the case of persons of the lowest class.[4] Others said that some souls went to the regions of Akea (Wakea) and Miru (Milu), two ancient kings of Hawaii. Of these two, Akea was reported to have been the first king of the island. When he died, he descended into the nether world and there founded a kingdom. His successor on the throne of Hawaii, by name Miru or Milu, also descended into the underworld at death, and shared the government of the infernal realm with his predecessor Akea. Their land

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 164 *sq.*

[2] J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 191; H. Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-one Years in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 71 *sq.*; J. Remy, *op. cit.* pp. 127, 129.

[3] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 365 *sq.*

[4] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 594.

is a place of darkness, their food, lizards and butterflies. But there are streams of water of which they drink, and wide-spreading trees under which they recline.[1] Milu is described as the Hawaiian Pluto, the lord of the lower world to whose dominions departed spirits go. His abode was in the west, hence the ghosts of such as died on the eastern shore of an island always had to cross to the western shore before they could set out for their final place of rest in the spirit land. Some said that Milu had his dwelling under the ocean, and that he was the prince of wicked spirits.[2] However, according to some accounts, the two ancient kings, Milu and Akea, ruled over separate regions in the spirit land, which were tabooed to each other, so that nobody could pass from the one to the other. Akea or Wakea dwelt in the upper region, and there the souls of chiefs dwelt with him; whereas Milu occupied the muddy lower region, and there the souls of common folk abode with him. In the upper region all was peaceful and orderly, and there persons who had faithfully complied with the precepts of religion in life were received after death. On the other hand the lower region, ruled over by Milu, was noisy and disorderly; evil spirits played their pranks there, and the souls of the dead subsisted on lizards and butterflies.[3] When persons recovered from a death-like swoon, it was supposed that their souls had gone to the underworld and been sent back to earth by Milu. The best account of the spirit land was given by one who had spent eight days in it, and on returning to life reported to his family what he had seen. According to his observations, the spirit land is flat and fruitful, it is tolerably well lighted, and everything grows there spontaneously, so that, contrary to some reports, the palace of Milu is a really delightful place. Milu himself

[1] W. Ellis, *op. cit.* iv. 366; J. J. Jarves, *op. cit.* p. 38; A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 262. Ellis gives Miru as the form of the name, but the correct Hawaiian form is Milu; for in the Hawaiian dialect the ordinary Polynesian R is replaced by L. See E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. xxiii. In New Zealand and Mangaia the name Miru was given to the goddess of hell or of the dead. See E. Tregear, *op. cit.* pp. 243, 244, *s.v.* "Miru."

[2] E. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 243 *sq.*, *s.v.* "Miru."

[3] H. T. Cheever, *Life in the Sandwich Islands* (London, 1851), p. 12; A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, pp. 264 *sqq.*; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 99.

is not married to any one particular wife; but from time to time he chooses for his consorts the most beautiful of the female ghosts when they arrive in deadland, and the women thus honoured are naturally taboo for the male ghosts. All souls live there in exactly the same state in which they quitted their bodies. The souls of those who died young, especially of those who fell in battle, are hale and strong; whereas the souls of those who perished of disease are sickly and weak, and weak, too, are the souls of such as died in old age.[1]

There were three places in the islands from which the ghosts took their departure for the other world. One was at the northern extremity of the island of Hawaii; one was at the western end of Maui; and one was at the southern point of Oahu.[2] According to one account, the ghosts on their passage to Milu's subterranean realm went westward in the direction of the setting sun, and either leaped from a rock into the sea or vanished into a hole in the ground.[3]

But before bidding a last farewell to earth, the soul of the deceased was believed to linger for a time in the neighbourhood of the grave or of the house. It had now become an *akua* or divine spirit, but during its stay on earth it was dreaded as an *akua-lapu* or "terrifying spirit," because it appeared to the living as a spectre or ghost. In time, however, it grew weaker and weaker and gradually disappeared altogether, like the other spirits (*akuas*). By that time it had found a guide to show it the way to Milu's realm, from which there is no return. Sometimes, however, the guardian god of a family would oppose the passage of a soul to the other world, and send it back to life, so that the seemingly dead man recovered.[4] It is said to have been a firmly established belief that the dead appeared to the living and communicated with them in dreams.[5] The priests in particular were favoured with such messages from the other world.[6]

[1] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 264.

[2] H. T. Cheever, *Life in the Sandwich Islands*, p. 12; A. Marcuse, *Die Hawaiischen Inseln*, p. 99.

[3] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, p. 265.

[4] A. Bastian, *op. cit.* p. 266.

[5] L. de Freycinet, *Voyage autour du Monde, Historique*, ii. 594.

[6] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 367.

A legend tells how a certain chief of Hawaii, sorrowing for the death of his wife, applied to a priest, who furnished him with a god called Kane-i-kou-alii (God of Chiefs), to guide him to the nether world of Milu, whither his beloved spouse had departed. Journeying together, the god and the man came to the end of the world, where grew a tree, which split open and allowed them to glide down into the depths. There the god hid behind a rock and allowed the chief to go on alone, but first he rubbed stinking oil over the chief's body. On arriving at Milu's palace the chief found the whole court full of spirits engaged in such noisy and tumultuous sports, that he could steal in among them unobserved, all the more because the nearest spirits mistook him for a ghost newly arrived with the stench of his dead body still on him, so that they turned away from him in disgust and made uncomplimentary remarks on his unsavoury condition. When they had played all sorts of games, the chief suggested that, as a new form of sport, they should all take out their eyes and throw them in a heap. The suggestion was accepted, and every one hastened to comply with it. But the chief took care to mark where the eyes of Milu fell, and snatching them up he hid them in the coconut beaker which he carried with him. As all the spirits were now blind, it was easy for the chief to make his way to the neighbouring realm of Akea or Wakea, which was tabooed to the spirits that swarmed in Milu's kingdom and might not be entered by them. However, after long negotiations, Milu was allowed to recover his eyes, on condition that the soul of the chief's wife should be sent back to earth and reunited to her body, which was happily accomplished.[1]

The Hawaiians were not without some notion of a general resurrection of the dead. When the missionary William Ellis was conversing with some of the natives on that subject, they said that they had heard of it before from a native priest named Kapihe, who had lived at their village in the time of King Kamehameha. The priest told the king that at his death he would see his ancestors, and that hereafter all the kings, chiefs, and people of Hawaii would

[1] A. Bastian, *Inselgruppen in Oceanien*, pp. 265 *sq.*

live again. When Ellis asked them how this would be effected, and with what circumstances it would be attended, whether they would live again in Hawaii or in Miru (Milu), the Hades of the Sandwich Islands, they replied that there were two gods, who conducted the departed spirits of their chiefs to some place in the heavens, where the souls of kings and chiefs sometimes dwelt, and that afterwards the two divine conductors returned with the royal and princely souls to earth, where they accompanied the movements and watched over the destinies of their survivors. The name of one of these gods was Kaonohiokala, which means the eye-ball of the sun; and the name of the other was Kuahairo. Now Kapihe was priest to the latter god, and professed to have received a revelation, in accordance with which he informed King Kamehameha that, when the monarch should depart this life, the god Kuahairo would carry his spirit to the sky and afterwards accompany it back to earth again, whereupon his body would be restored to life and youth; that he would have his wives again and resume his government in Hawaii; that at the same time the existing generation would see and know their parents and ancestors, and that all the people who had died would rise again from the dead.[1] It is to be feared, however, that the priest was a deceiver; for King Kamehameha has not yet come to life again, and up to the present time the general resurrection has not taken place in Hawaii.

That must conclude what I have to say about the belief in immortality and the worship of the dead in Polynesia. The notions which the Polynesians entertained on this subject cannot but strike a civilised European as childish, while the customs which they based on them must appear to him in great part foolish, even where they were not barbarous and cruel. How far such childish notions and foolish customs tend to confirm or to refute the widespread, almost universal, belief in the survival of the human soul after death, is a question which I must leave my readers to answer for themselves.

[1] W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, iv. 144 *sq.*

NOTE

TABOO AMONG THE MAORIS

The power which Maori chiefs possessed of imposing, or at all events of enforcing, a taboo seems not to have been quite so absolute as might perhaps be inferred from the statement in the text.[1] We are told that the power of the taboo mainly depended on the influence of the person who imposed it. If it were put on by a great chief, it would not be broken, but a powerful man often violated the taboo of an inferior. A chief, for example, would frequently lay one of these sacred interdicts on a road or a river, and then nobody would dare to go by either, unless he felt himself strong enough to set the chief's taboo at defiance. The duration of the taboo was arbitrary, and depended on the will of the person who imposed it. Similarly with the extent to which the prohibition applied: sometimes it was limited to a particular object, sometimes it embraced many: sometimes it was laid on a single spot, at other times it covered a whole district.[2]

To render a place taboo a chief had only to tie one of his old garments to a pole and stick it up on the spot which he proposed to make sacred, while at the same time he declared that the prohibited area was part of his own body, such as his backbone, or that it bore the name of one of his ancestors. In the latter case all the persons descended from that particular ancestor were in duty bound to rally to the defence of the chief's taboo, and the more distant the ancestor, and the more numerous his descendants, the greater the number of the champions thus pledged to the support of the family honour. Hence the longer a man's pedigree, the better chance he stood of maintaining his taboo against all comers, for the larger was the troop of adherents whom he enlisted in its defence. Thus chiefs, with family trees which reached backward to the gods, were in a far better position to make good their arbitrary interdicts than mere ordinary mortals, who hardly remembered their grandfathers. In this as in other respects the taboo was essentially an aristocratic institution.[3]

[1] Above, p. 47.

[2] R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Maui, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, Second Edition (London, 1870), p. 168. Compare J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage autour du Monde et à la recherche de la Pérouse, Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1832–1833), ii. 530.

[3] R. Taylor, *op. cit.* p. 169.

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